

# *Sa'di in Love*

The Lyrical  
Verses of Persia's  
Master Poet



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KATOUIZIAN

I.B.TAURIS

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ILLUSTRATED BY MAHBOBE GHODS

I.B. TAURIS

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*In loving memory of my mother  
In honour of a debt that was never repaid*

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## *Preface and acknowledgements*

Sa‘di was a master of the lyric, rivalled only by Hafiz and, to a lesser extent, Rumi in the annals of classical Persian poetry. Yet, strangely, he is much less admired for his lyrics than for such works as *Golestan* and *Bustan*.<sup>1</sup> In this volume, my fourth on Sa‘di, I exclusively discuss his lyrics and present 78 of them in Persian, along with English translations, an endeavour that I hope will be appreciated by admirers of Sa‘di and classical Persian poetry, as well as by lovers of lyrical poetry in any language.

In bringing this volume to its readers in an attractively designed format, I owe a considerable debt of gratitude to Dr Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali and the Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, of which she is president, for their extremely generous financial support. The publication of this book in a plain format would not have been worthy of Sa‘di’s lyrics; it is a mark of Dr Mir-Djalali’s appreciation of this great poet that when I raised this issue with her she wholeheartedly concurred. Thanks are also due to the Soudavar Memorial Foundation for its generous contribution to the cost of preparing the images by the talented artist Dr Mahbobe Ghods, which provide form and style for the lyrics and the book as a whole. I am also indebted to Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi for his moral support and his assistance in preparing the book for publication. Finally, I humbly acknowledge my sole responsibility for any faults and shortcomings that may remain.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Sa‘di and love*

Sa‘di is one of the greatest classical Persian poets of all time. Born in the seventh century of Hijra, thirteenth of the Christian era, he is the only Persian luminary whose fame was so widespread that during his lifetime a Turk in Anatolia could quote his verse in a letter,<sup>1</sup> and shortly after whose death Chinese singers could sing one of his lyrics without knowing what it meant.<sup>2</sup> He was a contemporary of Rumi (though they are unlikely to have known of each other) and, despite significant differences in thought and style, influenced the poetry of Hafiz in various ways. Sa‘di was translated into European languages from the seventeenth century onwards and had a considerable impact on European philosophers, intellectuals, writers and humanists in the centuries to follow. In both East and West he was most admired for his book of prose *Golestan* and, to a lesser extent, his long poem *Bustan* on morals and manners, with the result that, as noted below, they overshadowed his more than 700 lyrics and love songs, which count among the finest ever written by Persian masters.<sup>3</sup>

Classical Persian literature in general and poetry in particular had come a long way since their emergence in the ninth and tenth centuries, covering a whole range of subjects, from panegyrics, lyrics, laments and reflections to history, epics, romances, meditations and mysticism.<sup>4</sup> To varying degrees, the impact of this rich background can be felt throughout Sa‘di’s works, although both his ideas and his style are highly original.

There is a long-standing debate among Iranian as well as Western Persianist critics as to the object of love and adoration in the lyrical works of classical Persian poets, from the twelfth and, especially, the thirteenth century (the century of Sa‘di and Rumi) onwards. Hardly anyone would claim that the lyricism of Rudaki Samarqandi, or Farrokhi Sistani or

Manucheri Damghani, who flourished in the tenth and eleventh centuries, implied a mystical outlook and attitude. But come the twelfth century, the rise of mysticism in Persian poetry opens the gate to speculation on whether lyrical songs are addressed to a worldly and corporeal or to an other-worldly and mystical beloved. The traditional Iranian view until the twentieth century tended to favour the latter interpretation to the extent that some classicists went so far as seeking the object of love in virtually all Persian lyricism after the twelfth century in Sufi longing for reunion with the Creator. Furthermore, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Iranian scholars tended to believe that the great Persian masters were all chaste, sexless and entirely ascetic, and that any worldly interest or passion was beneath their exalted status. Many Western scholars, although they may not have gone that far, generally tended to follow the views of Persian scholars regarding the fundamental mystical quality of much of the lyricism of the great classics. There is of course ample external evidence (leaving aside the lyric itself) in the case of poets such as the twelfth-century Sana'i and Attar, the thirteenth-century Rumi and Araqi, and the fourteenth-century Hafiz and many lesser talents in the period, supporting the description of their lyrics as mystical (though with a significant caveat in the case of Hafiz). But in what meaningful sense can so many of Sa'di's lyrics and those of the fourteenth-century Obeyd Zakani and Jahan Malak Khatun (both of whom were influenced by Sa'di), for example, be described as such? The following lines by Sa'di speak for themselves:

The size of your mouth I will not mention  
It cannot hold even a word by intention  
Wrapped in its garment, your body  
Is just like a soul inside a body.  
And he who would see you naked  
Would say it is just a flower bed

or

Sweeter than these lips I have not heard anyone speak  
Speak, are you sugar itself or your mouth honey?

or

A glance at your friends much better sits  
Than sending them greetings and gifts.

or

On reflection you'll know that your heart of steel  
Does not at all suit your breasts of silk.

or

No-one can come between us tonight  
By the dust I swear not even a particle might.  
Stop the coquetry and pride; take off your headdress  
Open your cummerbund and let out that cypress.

or

The beloved's breast engulfed in her curly hair  
Is like a ball of ivory hit by a black polo mallet.

It would, indeed, require a superhuman effort to interpret such lines as mystical and other-worldly. This is similarly true of many of the lyrics translated in this volume.

No classical Persian poet was a greater and more passionate lover than Sa'di. One might even claim that he was the greatest lover; he certainly stands as the greatest composer of lyrics about human love in classical Persian poetry. Nevertheless the impact of *Golestan* and *Bustan* has been so great that they have overshadowed the work of Sa'di as a poet of love songs. Not only have they seldom been translated into Western languages, in contrast to these two books, and especially *Golestan*, but even in Iran Sa'di's ghazals have never been appreciated as much as they deserve, except in vocal form in traditional Persian music.

Edward Browne believed that Sa'di was better known in Iran for his love lyrics than for *Bustan* and *Golestan*.<sup>5</sup> However, at the time Browne wrote this, and for a couple of decades thereafter, *Golestan* was still the basic text used by primary students to begin reading Persian. At any rate, in Iran throughout the twentieth century *Bustan* and *Golestan* had pride of place over Sa'di's other works, among both scholars and the general public

– leaving aside the general onslaught on Sa‘di by certain ‘moderns’ from the mid-century, which I have discussed elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

To be sure, some critical and editorial work on Sa‘di’s ghazals was published in the twentieth century, notably an article by the scholar and poet Rashid Yasemi in the collection *Sa‘di Nameh*, which however makes the not unfamiliar, though unrealistic, claim that all of his lyrics were mystical and esoteric;<sup>7</sup> and the entire corpus of Sa‘di’s ghazals by the noted scholar and critic Mohammad Ali Foroughi, which shortly afterwards was included in his edition of Sa‘di’s collected works, the *Kolliyat*.<sup>8</sup> It was decades after that when the poet and critic Habib Yaghma’i published a new edition of the lyrics.<sup>9</sup> In the meantime Ali Dashti, though not strictly speaking a scholar but rather an intellectual with a wide-ranging knowledge of classical Persian poetry and a flair for literary criticism, published his volume on Sa‘di, which includes a small section on his lyrics, entitled ‘Master of the Ghazal’.<sup>10</sup>

He writes that ‘Sa‘di is master of the ghazal. Only Hafiz does not call him master of the ghazal [whereas] all the subsequent poets have quietly thought of him as master of the ghazal and followed him.’<sup>11</sup> However, he further observes that ‘when they wish to talk about Sa‘di, first they should speak of his ghazals, but right from the beginning in this book I felt I should avoid this. On many occasions you have felt that you cannot describe your feelings... In [reading] Sa‘di’s ghazals we often have a feeling which we cannot express.’<sup>12</sup>

In the twenty-first century the academic and critic Gholamhosyen Yusefi has published a new and highly annotated edition of the ghazals,<sup>13</sup> while the scholar Sa‘id Hamidiyan has published a critical volume on Sa‘di’s lyrics.<sup>14</sup> For my part, I devote a whole chapter to Sa‘di’s love lyrics in my English book on his life and works,<sup>15</sup> as well as five critical chapters in my Persian book,<sup>16</sup> and include a considerable number of his ghazals in an anthology of his works.<sup>17</sup> The paucity of this list of largely critical editions compared with critical works on and editions of Hafiz’s lyrics testifies to the relative lack of critical attention paid to Sa‘di’s ghazals.

The fate of Sa‘di’s lyrics outside Iran has been somewhat better but not that much. Sa‘di’s great reputation among Western intellectuals and literati, beginning in the seventeenth century but especially in the age of

Enlightenment and after, largely rested on *Golestan* and, to a far lesser extent, *Bustan*, but hardly at all on his love poetry. It was the tales and wisdoms of *Golestan*, in particular, that impressed Voltaire and his fellow Encyclopédistes, to the point where Lazare Carnot, the mathematician and French revolutionary leader, named his son, a leading nineteenth-century physicist, after Sa‘di, and, later, the latter’s nephew, a French president, was called ‘Sadi Carnot’.

Likewise, the considerable number of nineteenth-century writers and intellectuals, from Gottfried Herder, Honoré de Balzac and Alfred de Musset through to Victor Hugo and Ernest Renan, extensively listed by Henri Massé,<sup>18</sup> who knew Sa‘di did so not through his lyrics but on account of his other works, mainly *Golestan*. This is also largely the case with Sa‘di’s greatest American champion, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who, in his famous poem *Saadi*, was much more engaged with Sa‘di the humanist and advocate of a positive, clean, contented outlook on life than with Sa‘di the ardent lover and singer of love songs. He wrote in the introduction of a new translation of *Golestan*: ‘The word *Saadi* means “fortunate”. In him the trait is no result of levity, much less of convivial habit, but first of a happy nature, to which victory is habitual, easily shedding mishaps, with sensibility to pleasure, and with resources against pain. But it also results from the habitual perception of beneficent laws that control the world; he inspires in the reader a good hope.’<sup>19</sup>

To be sure, a fair number of the ghazals were translated into European languages in the nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries. As well as some attempts in India, the prolific Austrian orientalist Joseph von Hammer Purgstall translated some of Sa‘di’s poems, including fourteen ghazals, and a few other German orientalists followed suit.<sup>20</sup> Massé’s comprehensive survey for his time does not indicate the translation of any ghazals into French, and there does not seem to have been any significant change in that regard after the publication of his book in 1919. In Britain, however, a few eminent orientalists, such as E.G. Browne,<sup>21</sup> R.A. Nicholson<sup>22</sup> and A.J. Arberry,<sup>23</sup> tried their hands at translating a small number of the ghazals. But pride of place in this exercise – certainly in terms of sheer quantity – goes to Lucas White King, who in the 1920s published more than 600 of Sa‘di’s 715 lyrics.<sup>24</sup> Once again the paucity of critical work on Sa‘di’s lyrics is evident. Furthermore, what has been

translated, although worthwhile, is not without certain drawbacks, especially from the standpoint of modern linguistic and literary norms. Often, words and figures of speech deployed are borrowed from the traditions of classical English poetry, which, especially in those cases close to literal translation, make comprehension difficult, and as a consequence not much is left of poems in their original form. More frequently, the formal structure of the ghazal is abandoned in favour of a prose or stanzaic style, such that, in the case of several ghazals taken together, structural consistency is lost. For these reasons the old translations are not readily accessible, quite apart from the fact that the books in which they have been published are out of print and not easily found, except in specialist libraries.

### **The nature and concepts of love**

The theme of love is of course as old as the hills. It therefore naturally emerged in the poetry of the tenth-century classical poets writing in New Persian. But the concepts of love, lover, beloved, and so on, evolved in different ways in the period from the tenth/eleventh centuries to the thirteenth century when Sa'di flourished. First, as noted, there is hardly any major eleventh-century poet whose lyrics can truly be described as mystical. Strictly speaking, it is from the twelfth century that mystical, and more specifically Sufi, poetry began to emerge and mature in the work of such major poets as Sana'i and Attar; in the thirteenth century, in the hands of Rumi, Araqi, Shabestari, Awhadi and others, it reached its highest expression.

Second, the nature of mundane and corporeal love also began to evolve between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries: in the earlier period the lover was, if not superior, at least equal to the person he loved. The eleventh-century Farrokhi Sistani, for example, wrote of making up with his beloved 'after a long war', and the beloved bowing to him, giving the impression that in such cases the beloved was a servant or slave. In Nezami Ganjavi's romances, Khosrow and Shirin are equal as successful lovers, whereas Leyli and Majnun are also equals, though in their total failure. It is only Farhad who is selfless before the love of Shirin, the superior beloved. However, in Sa'di and hence from the thirteenth century, the lover consistently insists that he is inferior to the beloved, would do

anything for so much as a glance by her, and is ready to be trampled under her feet and become talked about in town for loving her.

There may be occasional complaints about the attitude and behaviour of the beloved, her lack of response to the poor lover's begging for her attention or her lofty disregard for his pain and suffering, but all such complaints are muted, qualified and sometimes regretted, even in the same poem. Sa'di, for example, opens a ghazal by asking 'Who am I the lowly person to desire your hand?', and Hafiz (in the fourteenth century) advises in a verse 'When the beloved displays coquetry, try to offer her more'.

It is not difficult to discern the influence of mysticism and mystical love in this romantic idealisation of the object of love and the abject self-denial of the lover. Yet, at least as regards Sa'di's love poetry, matters do not simply stop there. Most of his ghazals also make obvious reference to flesh and blood, and on occasion the poet and lover indulge in the pleasures of carnal passion.

### A typology of Sa'di's ghazals

Traditionally, Sa'di's ghazals were written and (later) published in his collected works under four headings: *Tayyebat, Badaye', Khavatim* and *Ghazaliyat-e Qadim*, which titles John D. Yohannan has translated into English as 'Plain, unornamented', 'Rhetorical', 'Final' and 'Old or early'.<sup>25</sup> However, there is no clear justification for this categorisation, because, as Forughi has argued, the headings may not even have emanated from Sa'di himself. Indeed, in the standard edition of the collected works, cited above and used in this volume, Forughi drops the distinction among the four groups and instead divides Sa'di's ghazals into two categories: those he describes as mundane lyrics (*moghazelat*), which are the great majority, and those he places under the ethical-cum-mystical heading *mavaez*.<sup>26</sup>

In this volume I have divided Sa'di's ghazals concerned with mundane or 'apparent' (*majazi*) love into four categories: those which express his love for the beloved; those which describe the beloved; those which express the joy of union; and those which reflect the sadness of separation. Inevitably, there is a degree of overlap among these four categories. However, there is enough distinction among them to justify such a typology.<sup>27</sup>

There remains the controversial category of Sa‘di’s ghazals that are regarded as expressions of mystical, ‘real’ (*haqiqi*), love. It was noted above that according to Yasemi all of Sa‘di’s ghazals are symbolic, esoteric and mystical, addressed to the divine beloved, much as we find in the works of Sufi poets such as Rumi, although Yasemi offers no evidence for this view. A contemporary Iranian critic, Sa‘id Hamidiyan, for his part, classifies the ghazals into three groups: the obviously mundane; the obviously mystical; and the group that, though not quite mystical, ‘have a mystical atmosphere’.<sup>28</sup> He offers several examples of the first and second groups, but only one in the third group, which is open to a wide range of interpretations.<sup>29</sup> One gains the impression that he regards as mundane mainly those lyrics that are intensely physical, one example of which he even describes as “‘erotic’, even ‘porno’”.<sup>30</sup>

The views of Sa‘di’s ghazals held by Browne, Nicholson and Arberry, largely coloured as they were by the tradition of classical Iranian scholars, favour the mystical interpretation, but not without some caveats and a certain amount of ambiguity, largely arising from the stark profanity of many of the ghazals as well as the fact that Sa‘di’s esoteric lyrics lack the passion of the works of Sufi poets.<sup>31</sup> Browne, for example, suggests that, although ‘the traces of [mysticism] in Sa‘di’s writings are neither few nor uncertain ... in the main it may be said without hesitation that worldly wisdom rather than mysticism is his chief characteristic’.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, Nicholson, while maintaining the basic mystical interpretation, argues rather more aptly that Sa‘di ‘was too fine an artist to leave enthusiasm out of the picture, but “God intoxicated” is the last epithet one would think of applying to him. His poems do not suggest that he knew the higher stages of mystical life except by hearsay.’<sup>33</sup> Yet the problem remains that this is their view of virtually all of Sa‘di’s ghazals, not just those that are obviously ethical/ mystical; whereas in fact upwards of 600 of the ghazals are concerned with corporeal love, and fewer than 100 are in the former category.

The upshot is that Foroughi’s classification, described above, is the most convincing, namely that the great majority of Sa‘di’s love lyrics are about human love, and the remaining small minority are ethical/mystical ghazals, which could be more aptly described as those that ‘have a mystical atmosphere’.

Sa‘di’s enthusiasm, his passion for the love of his fellow human beings, flows through his love songs, but his ethical/mystical lyrics do not contain ecstatic outbursts such as are often observed in Rumi’s ghazals, normally addressed to his mystical mentor Shams-e Tabrizi (in the image of the mystical beloved). The ghazals of Sa‘di, Rumi and Hafiz are generally quite different from each other, and each of them has a unique style, although many poets subsequently adopted their models. In their hands the Persian ghazal reached its apogee.

Rumi’s ghazals are often passionate in tone and have a musical metre, giving credence to reports that many were taken down by disciples while the poet uttered the words as he was ‘whirling round a column’.

Sa‘di’s ghazals are virtually impeccable in both form and technique – being the first group of ghazals written that achieved perfection. They are about the joys of love, the ecstasy of union with the beloved and the sadness of separation, and sometimes relatively sober ethical/mystical subjects. The figures of speech or literary devices used are so masterly that the poems deploy words and generate meanings at the loftiest and most creative level, although Sa‘di’s ghazals are at the same time sweet in form and uncomplicated in content, such that they are not difficult to read and enjoy.

The ghazal of Hafiz is likewise formally impeccable, but it normally contains more than one theme, so that both mystical and human love as well as eulogy for an important person – notably his beloved Shah Shoja’ – may be found in the same single piece. It usually combines mystical and human love so well that it is not easy to tell one from the other. Finally, in the ghazal of Hafiz, the use of relatively complex (albeit highly accomplished) metaphors and imagery – which would be further extended by the best of the ‘Indian style’ poets – gives it an ambiguous, sometimes even enigmatic, character, which accounts for much of the fascination experienced by readers of his poetry, including in its regular use by them in a fortune-telling context.

Here are lines from ghazals by Sa‘di, Hafiz and Rumi as brief examples by which to compare their love poetry, although this exercise is inevitably partial and somewhat arbitrary:

*Sa‘di*

I tried hard to hide the secret of desire

It was not possible to stop burning on fire.  
I was alert from the start not to fall in love  
All reason faded seeing your face above.  
Your mouth told the ears of my soul a story  
And now the people's warning is all a story.  
You alone can stop the riot by hiding thy face  
I cannot bear to turn away my face.  
Broken-hearted, if I come to dance and wine  
I'd arrive on my feet, but return shoulder-high.  
Come to me in peace at night  
I have not slept longing for you all night.

(‘Love’s Secret’)

*Hafiz*

Your beauty shone at the creation’s dawn  
Love appeared, on fire the entire world thrown...  
Reason tried to use that fire to make a light  
The lightning of disdain set the world alight  
The stranger tried to come to the sight of mystery The hidden hand  
stretched and put him to misery...  
My celestial soul longed for the dimple of your chin  
The curls of your hair it put its hand in

(*Divan-e Hafiz*)

*Rumi*

I was dead I came alive I was tears I became smile  
The kingdom of love came and I became eternally alive  
I have the eye of lion I have the soul of the brave  
The courage of a lion, I am Venus shining bright  
You do not belong here, said he, you are not insane  
I went away, went mad and put myself in chains  
You are not drunk, said he, not of this cut  
I went and got drunk, drowned myself in delight

(*Divan-e Shams*)

Sa‘di’s ethical/mystical ghazals effectively embody a compelling mixture of reflections, guidance and admonition, but they certainly do not compare with those of the leading Sufi ghazal writers in terms of depth, enthusiasm and passion. They convey his knowledge of, respect for, and sympathy with genuine mystical thoughts and feelings, but they also show that he is not personally immersed in mystical experience. They are impeccable in form, like the rest of his poetry, and accomplished and effective in communicating their meaning, but they do not move the enthusiastic reader to heights of ecstasy and depths of passion, as does much of his mundane poetry for those moved by the fervour of love for a fellow human being. The following examples may be compared with certain Sufi ghazals, including that by Rumi quoted above.

The ghazal on the potential of humanity to rise up above the status of angels contains general mystical lessons and admonitions, but (especially in the Persian original) in a highly elevated language:

The human body is ennobled by the human soul  
You will not be human just wearing a nice shawl  
If eye, mouth, ear and nose define a human being  
What is the difference between man and a picture on the wall?  
Eating, sleeping, anger, passion are darkness and ignorance  
Animals know not of the world of humanity at all  
Try to be a human being in reality, otherwise a parrot  
May mimic the human beings’ language, speech and call.  
How as a human became you captive to demons?  
Not even angels can rise up to man’s potential  
If the cannibalism in your nature dies and disappears  
You will be always alive through the human soul.

(‘The Place of Humanity’)

The ghazal on the kingdom of beggars is more specific, though still quite familiar, pointing out the morals, attitude and behaviour that will result in mystical fulfilment and liberation. It also shows more directly the ethical and religious context within which the mystic path must take:

There is no life as royal as that of beggars  
No kingdom is more secure than contentment

If anyone has real dignity it is he  
Whom others treat with indignity.  
Everyone has a character, a colour, a creed  
Give them all up, that is the best thing  
On the Day of Judgement he will be clothed  
Who in this world is naked, is not adorned.  
Who has real knowledge of the world?  
It is he who knows no-one and is all on his own  
The stone and the vegetation which are of some use  
Are better than the man who is not useful to others.  
You don't know, O dervish, what is expedient  
Rejoice that your poverty is not inexpedient

(‘The Kingdom of Beggars’)

The following ghazal combines expression of human love with elements of mystical esotericism. For that reason, as well as the fact that it contains particular themes, it anticipates a number of ghazals written by Hafiz decades later:

Trees are in bloom, nightingales drunk  
The world has turned young, friends in joyful truck.  
Full of charm always was our drinking partner  
Now adorned, she is more charming than ever.  
Those who during Ramadan broke the harp  
Heard the flower breathe and broke their fast.  
The lawn has been beaten down delightfully  
By the mystics and non-mystics dancing joyously.  
Two friends will appreciate friendship's fire  
Who parted for a while then returned in full desire.  
No sober person leaves the Sufis' abode [*khaneqah*]  
To tell the police that the Sufis are inebriate.  
In our quaint garden there is a floral tree  
More balanced in figure than the cypress tree.  
If the whole world becomes my enemy, I swear  
By my beloved that of none other I will care.  
He whom love has killed looks like seafarers

Who dropped their cargo and survived themselves.  
The cypress tree was asked why it bore no fruit  
The free, it replied, are empty in hand and foot.

(‘Love in Spring’)

So much for Sa‘di’s ethical/mystical poetry as far as his lyrical songs are concerned, which are the subject of this volume. But a thoroughgoing discussion of Sa‘di and mysticism would be incomplete without reference to Chapter 3 of *Bustan*, which is not a book of love lyrics but a *masnavi* on manners and morals written in the form of Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*. It is here that, rather unexpectedly, the reader comes across some of Nicholson’s ‘God intoxicated’ material.

Entitled ‘On Love, Intoxication and Ecstasy’, it is here that Sufi ideas are put forward with full force and stylistic authenticity:

Happy the days of those longing for Him  
Whether they receive wounds or ointment from Him  
Beggars are they, having no love for kingship  
Patient in their beggary in hope of Him

Man’s love of one like himself can be such as to make him forget everything but his beloved, let alone his love of the Eternal Source:

Given that mundane love, founded on passion  
Is so potent and takes such hold  
Is it surprising that the seekers of real love  
Are so deeply submerged in its ocean?<sup>34</sup>

Almost the whole of Chapter 3 of *Bustan* – together with the recurring mystical and esoteric concepts and images such as Beauty, Beloved, Seeker, Friend, Truth, Candle, Moth, and so on – may be cited as evidence both of Sa‘di’s familiarity with Sufi concepts and categories and of his great sympathy for, if not affinity with, them. However, this subject, which has been discussed fairly extensively elsewhere, is not a concern of this volume.<sup>35</sup>

### The question of gender

In Sa‘di’s lyricism regarding love of the flesh the beloved may be either a woman or a youth. Since personal pronouns are not gender-specific in the Persian language, there being a common third-person pronoun for males and females, it is not readily clear whether it is a ‘he’ or a ‘she’ to whom the poet is referring in the various poems. Yet there are often indicators that identify the gender of the beloved. In the case of women the clearest indicator is when the poet mentions their veil (*burka*, *niqab*, *purdah*, *hijab*), but there can be other indicators such as ‘breast’ and ‘long hair’ as well.

In the following couplet, the beloved has been likened to Shirin, Khosrow’s beloved Armenian wife:

Certainly you are the contemporary Shirin  
I am the slave of the Khosrow of the time.<sup>36</sup>

In this one the lover says that he will only stop watching the beloved if she puts on a veil:

I have no intention to take my eyes off you  
Unless you stop the riot by covering your face.<sup>37</sup>

Here the lover refers to his being caught and exposed as the beloved’s lover:

She took the veil off my love suddenly  
The one who is hidden in a veil.<sup>38</sup>

In the following the lover laments the beloved wearing a veil, even a garment:

It is a pity for that body to be covered  
It is injustice for that face to be veiled.<sup>39</sup>

In this couplet he compares the image of the beloved’s face to morning breeze:

Do you know why I love the morning breeze? It feels as if the beloved’s veil has been eased.<sup>40</sup>

In the following couplet the beloved's face is so radiant that if she took her veil off she would shine even in daylight:

A face which if it sheds the veil in daylight  
Will be shining like a star in a dark night.<sup>41</sup>

Here the beloved could hunt and capture people just by taking her veil off:  
You need no lasso for hunting people  
It is just enough if you drop the veil.<sup>42</sup>

In the following the beloved should wear a veil or no pious person will remain in the realm:

If with that beauty you do not cover your face  
Never again will you see a pious person in Pars.<sup>43</sup>

In this one the beloved is begged to drop her veil for men and women to admire the work of God: Do not for God's sake hide your face from man and woman

Let them see the work of God from left and right.<sup>44</sup>

This one contains a similar theme:

I wish the veil would fall off that site of beauty  
So everyone could see the picture gallery.<sup>45</sup>

And finally, even the veil will not quite hide the beloved's beauty:

The angel-face will not hide from view  
Even if she veils herself a hundred times.<sup>46</sup>

Love and admiration for youths are not a characteristic of Sa'di's poetry alone. The theme is found in the entire corpus of classical Persian poetry. Although it involves love for people of the same gender, this does not have quite the same personal, social and cultural implications that male homosexuality has in the West. Two types of such love may be distinguished. One is the love of Sufis and other mystics for youths purportedly as symbols of the beauty of God, as well as the expression of love, often in passionate language, for their pupils, disciples and fellow Sufis of any age. For instance, the case of Rumi's love for his mentor Shams is well known. Indeed many of his numerous ghazals are addressed

to Shams and contain expressions of love for him. But he also expresses passionate love for other male friends and admirers, such as Hesam al-Din Chalabi, both in his *Masnavi* and in his ghazals.

The other kind of love for youths is devotion and admiration for the beauty, the freshness, the very youthfulness, intelligence and intellect of young male persons with whom the poet or philosopher associated as mentor, teacher, pupil and young companion. As with the first type, this love is often expressed in the language of love of women, even though it did not necessarily involve sexual relations. It corresponds to the classical Greek tradition, not to that of contemporary Western homosexuality, or to male paedophilia. Love of and admiration for academic pupils was regarded as a higher love than that for women.

Once again the gender in the love poems is not explicit because of the absence of gender-specific personal pronouns; however, in some cases there are indicators that make clear the beloved is a youth. One of these is the word *khatt*, meaning literally ‘line’, but representing the early growth of hair above the youth’s mouth, which in full adulthood will become a moustache. It is sometimes expressed in the form of ‘green line’ (*khatt-e sabz*) and of ‘grass of the line’ (*sabzeh-ye khatt*), alluding to the colour of the early moustache in someone with dark hair. In one verse Sa‘di likens the *khatt* to a line drawn by a pen that uses dust instead of ink.

Another frequently used term is *shahed*, meaning a ‘witness’ who is present in the company and attests to the presence of esoteric beauty; *shahed-bazi* means literally ‘playing with *shahed*’ – that is, love and affection for youths. Other indicative terms are *nazar* and *nazarbazi*.

*Nazar* means literally ‘look’, and *nazarbazi* ‘looking-play’; *nazarbaz*, like *shahed-baz*, is one who is, or is inclined to be, involved with youths. *Saheb-nazar* means literally ‘the person who looks’ and has the same implication as *nazar-baz* and *shahed-baz*. All the terms refer exclusively to the love of youths. Among the great classics, these terms are found especially in the love poetry of Sa‘di and of Hafiz.

### ***Khatt***

The following couplet uses the phrase ‘grass of the line’ to refer to the beloved’s newly grown *khatt*:

Sa‘di likes the grass of the *khatt*  
Unlike animals that just love the grass.<sup>47</sup>

Here ‘green line’ is used to praise the beauty of the beloved:

Sa‘di loves a green *khatt*  
In the vicinity of a red cheek.<sup>48</sup>

*Khatt* is also used as a pun in some verses, apparently meaning ‘script’ or ‘handwriting’, but in fact meaning the youth’s ‘line’:

Good handwriting [*khatt*] is a chapter in your qualities Sweetness  
among your qualities is a letter in a book.<sup>49</sup>

Here is another example of the same pun:

The mystics of Pars bow to your handwriting [*khatt*]  
Have you been writing a verse by Sa‘di?<sup>50</sup>

And there are many other instances.

### ***Shahed, nazar, nazar-bazi and saheb-nazar***

In the following couplet the poet takes pride in his own *shahed-bazi*, his admiration and love for good-looking and intelligent youths:

Everywhere Sa‘di is known for *shahed-bazi*  
This in our creed is not a fault but an achievement.<sup>51</sup>

Here he advises himself to be both a recluse and a *shahed-baz*:

Be a recluse and a *shahed-baz*, O Sa‘di  
He is a *shahed* who visits the recluse.<sup>52</sup>

In the following couplet ‘Turk’ denotes a fair and light-skinned youth, and ‘Frankish’ means European:

There is no *shahed* as merry as my beloved Turk  
Frankish loop is not as good as his curly hair.<sup>53</sup>

The following contains an excellent image:

A *shahed* with a candle is pure riot  
Being also sleepy and drunk.<sup>54</sup>

In this couplet even the *mohtaseb*, the chief officer enforcing religious law, is mentioned in connection with admirers of youths:

*Mohtaseb* is pursuing the libertine  
Mindless of the *shahed-baz* Sufis.<sup>55</sup>

The following contains the two related terms *nazar* and *shahed* in one line:

No *shahed* that came to my sight [*nazar*] in coquetry  
Could enter my heart, for this is your place.<sup>56</sup>

Here the first line refers to the general love of youths, but the second is about the beloved looking at the lover:

Never in my life will I be able to stop *nazar*  
Take not your *nazar* off me O fount of beauty.<sup>57</sup>

The same interplay of words is observed in the following couplet:

If *nazar* is a sin, I have sinned many times  
I cannot stop myself from looking [*nazar*].<sup>58</sup>

And there are many more such examples.

### This translation

Translation of poetry from one language into another is notoriously difficult. It is perhaps more demanding in the case of classical Persian poetry than in many other traditions. Apart from the virtual loss of metre and rhyme, many of the literary devices – imagery, metaphor, punning, and so on – are also lost in the process. Yet it is possible to render classical Persian poetry in modern English such that it does not appear alien to the ordinary reader, let alone scholars of the subject.

In many, though not all, translations of Sa‘di’s ghazals, while the original Persian structure has often not been maintained, the rendering is close to being a literal expression of the original. The alternative to this practice, which has seldom been tried in Sa‘di’s case, is a broad poetical rendering of the original verse into English poetic form, the supreme example of which is Fitzgerald’s classic edition of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam.

Here I have maintained the structure of the ghazal, such that it presents each *mesra’* or hemistich and *beyt* or distich in English as in the original.

For example:

همه عمر بر ندارم سر از این خمار مستی  
که من آن زمان نبودم که تو در دم نشستی

Stop being drunk all my life, I will not  
For I was not yet born when you entered my sight.

(‘I Was Not Yet Born...’)

یک امشبی که در آگوش شاهد شکرم  
گرم چو عود بر آتش نهند غم نخورم

This one night in my beloved's embrace  
If they set me on fire it would leave no trace

(‘In the Beloved’s Embrace’)

سر آن ندارد امشب که برآید آفتابی  
چه خیال ها گذر کرد و گذر نکرد خوابی

The sun does not deign to rise upon this night  
What thoughts traversed the mind and no sleep in sight.

(‘A Night of Loneliness’)

سرو قدی میان انجمانی  
به که هفتاد سرو در چمنی

One with an image of the cypress tree  
Is better than many real cypress trees

(‘... Your Naked Body’)

تن آدمی شریف است به جان آدمیت  
نه همین لباس زیباست نشان آدمیت

The human body is ennobled by the human soul You will not be human  
just wearing a nice shawl

(‘The Place of Humanity’)

The above examples, as for the most part the translations below, show that they are not broad poetical renderings of the original into English verse. Nevertheless, although not literal translations, they communicate the poet's original verse in a complementary and accessible English version. As it happens the poems selected here do not include those which are clearly addressed to a youth, and so the feminine gender has been used throughout the translation.

Classical Persian poets did not use titles for their poems, be they ghazal or any other genre. I have, however, added titles, in both Persian and English, to the ghazals translated in this volume, which generally reflect their content.

Finally, from the thirteenth century onwards each ghazal was signed by the poet in his *takhallos* or pen name. Sa‘di’s *takhallos* is indeed ‘Sa‘di’ itself and is to be found at the end of each ghazal translated below.

# EXPRESSION *of* LOVE

## سر عشق

هزار جهد بکرم که سر عشق بپوشم  
نبود بر سر آتش میسرم که نجوشم  
بهوش بودم از اول که دل به کس نسیارم  
شما میل تو بدیدم نه عقل ماند و نه هوشم  
حکایتی ز دهانت به گوش جان من آمد  
دگرنصیحت مردم حکایت است به گوشم  
مگر تو روی بپوشی و فتنه باز نشانی  
که من قرار ندارم که دیده از تو بپوشم  
من رمیده دل آن به که در سماع نیایم  
که گر ب پای درآیم بدر برند به دوشم  
بیا به صلح من امروز در کنار من امشب  
که دیده خواب نکردست از انتظار تو دوشم  
مرا به هیچ بدآدی و من هنوز بر آنم  
که از وجود تو موبی به عالمی نفروشم  
به زخم خورده حکایت کنم ز دست جراحت  
که تندرست ملامت کند چو من بخروشم  
مرا مگوی که سعدی طریق عشق رها کن  
سخن چه فایده گفتن چو پند می ننیوشم  
به راه بادیه رفتن به از نشستن باطل  
وگر مراد نیایم به قدر وسع بکوشم

*Love's secret*

I tried hard to hide the secret of desire  
It was not possible to stop burning on fire.  
I was alert from the start not to fall in love  
All reason faded seeing your face above.  
Your mouth told the ears of my soul a story  
And now the people's warning is all a story.  
You alone can stop the riot by hiding thy face  
I cannot bear to turn away my face.  
Broken-hearted, if I come to dance and wine  
I'd arrive on my feet, but return shoulder-high.  
Come to me in peace at night  
I have not slept longing for you all night.  
You gave me up for nothing, yet I am determined  
Not to sell a hair of yours for earth, sky and wind.  
I'll describe my pain to someone who is wounded  
Telling a healthy person I'd be reprimanded.  
Do not say 'Sa'di give up love and passion'  
It will be no use since I will not listen.  
Entering a desert is better than staying put  
Even if I make it not, I'll remain on foot.<sup>1</sup>

که من آن زمان نبودم...

همه عمر برندارم سر از این خمار مستن  
که من آن زمان نبودم که تو در دم نشستی  
تو نه مثل آفتابی که حضور و غیبت افتاد  
دگران روند و آیند و تو همچنان که هستی  
چه حکایت از فرات که نداشتم ولیکن  
تو چو روی باز کردی در ماجرا ببستی  
نظری به دوستان کن که هزار بار از آن به  
که تحيتی نویسی و هدیتی فرسنی  
دل دردمند ما را که اسیر توست یارا  
به وصال مرهمی نه چو به انتظار خستی  
نه عجب که قلب دشمن شکنی به روز هیجا  
تو که قلب دوستان را به مفارقت شکستی  
برو ای فقیه دانا به خدای بخش ما را  
تو و زهد و پارسایی من و عاشقی و مستن  
دل هوشمند باید که به دلبری سپاری  
که چو قبله ایت باشد به از آن که خود پرسنی  
چو زمام بخت و دولت نه به دست جهد باشد  
چه کنند اگر زبونی نکنند و زیر دستی  
گله از فراق یاران و جفای روزگاران  
نه طریق توست سعدی، کم خویش گیر و رستی

*I was not yet born...*

Stop being drunk all my life, I will not  
For I was not yet born when you entered my sight.  
Unlike the sun you do not come and go  
Others come and go; you permanently glow.  
What pain I endured from our separation  
Yet your face shone and ended the damnation.  
A glance at your friends much better sits  
Than sending them greetings and gifts.  
You broke my aching heart which is your captive  
With separation, now cure it with the ointment of love.  
No wonder if you pierce the enemy's heart in battle  
Broken as you have your friends' hearts at farewell.  
Go away learned doctor, leave us to the Almighty  
Us, loving and drunkenness; you, prayer and piety.  
You must give your enlightened heart to love  
Loving a Ka'ba is better than self-love.  
Since good fortune will not be made by energy  
What then can we do but show humility?  
Complaining of separations and the inconstancy of life, Sa'di,  
Is not in your line; take your fate and be free.<sup>2</sup>

## صبح قیامت

در آن نفس که همیرم در آرزوی تو باشم  
بدان امید دهم جان که خاک کوی تو باشم  
به وقت صبح قیامت که سر ز خاک برآرم  
به گفتگوی تو خیزم به جست وجودی تو باشم  
به مجمعی که در آیند شاهدان دو عالم  
نظر به سوی تو دارم غلام روی تو باشم  
به خوابگاه عدم گر هزار سال بخسبم  
ز خواب عاقبت آگه به بوی موی تو باشم  
حدیث روضه نگویم گل بهشت نجویم  
جمال حور نجویم دوان به سوی تو باشم  
می بهشت ننوشم ز دست ساقی رضوان  
مرا به باده چه حاجت که مست روی تو باشم  
هزار بادیه سهل است با وجود تو رفتن  
وگر خلاف کنم سعدیا به سوی تو باشم

### *Love at the dawn of Resurrection*

In the breath that I die, for you I'll be longing  
Wishing to turn into the dust of your belonging.  
At the dawn of Resurrection when my eyes open  
For you I'll be looking, to you I'll be talking.  
Among the beauties of the two worlds  
Being a slave to your face, at you I'll be looking.  
In nothingness a thousand years if I sleep  
I shall rise up by the scent of your hair deep.  
I'll not talk of Eden or smell the paradise rose  
Or pursue the houris, to you I'll run without pause.  
I will not drink of Heaven's wine, ruby bright  
I will not need it, being drunk by your sight.  
With you I can tread a thousand deserts with ease  
Otherwise, Sa'di, I'll come to you and appease.<sup>3</sup>

حیف باشد که تو یار من و من یار تو باشم  
من بی مایه که باشم که خریدار تو باشم  
حیف باشد که تو یار من و من یار تو باشم  
تو مگر سایه لطفی به سر وقت من آری  
که من آن مایه ندارم که به مقدار تو باشم  
خویشتن بر تو نبندم که من از خود نپسندم  
که تو هرگز گل من باش و من خار تو باشم  
هرگز اندیشه نکردم که کمندت به من افتاد  
که من آن وقوع ندارم که گرفتار تو باشم  
هرگز اندر همه عالم نشناسم غم و شادی  
مگرآن وقت که شادی خور و غم خوار تو باشم  
کذر از دست رقیبان نتوان کرد به کویت  
مگر آن وقت که در سایه زنهار تو باشم  
کر خداوند تعالی به گناهیت بگیرد  
کو بیامرز که من حامل اوزار تو باشم  
مردمان عاشق گفتار من، ای قبله خوبان  
چون نباشند که من عاشق دیدار تو باشم  
من چه شایسته آنم که ترا خوانم و دانم  
مگرم هم تو ببخشی که سزاوار تو باشم  
کر چه دانم که به وصلت نرسم بازنگردم  
که در این راه همیرم که طلبکار تو باشم  
نه در این عالم دنیا که در آن عالم عقبی  
همچنان بر سر آنم که وفادار تو باشم  
خاک بادا تن سعدی اگر ش تو نپسندی  
که نشاید که تو فخر من و من عار تو باشم

### *Lover's humility*

Who am I, worthless me, to ask for your hand  
Wrong of me to be your lover, you my beloved.  
I cannot possibly rise up to your station  
Unless I rise by a ray of your affection.  
I will not attach myself to you for I do not  
Wish at all to be your thorn and you my bud.  
I never deigned to be entrapped by you  
For I am not worth being a captive of you.  
Sadness and joy I know not in the world  
Unless I am joyful with you and sad without you.  
Rivals will not let me approach your abode  
Only you can protect me on the road.  
If the Almighty punishes you for a sin  
Tell Him that *I* am the bearer of your sins.  
How could people not love listening to me  
When I do so much love seeing thee?  
What am I worth to want to desire you  
Except if you tell me that I deserve you?  
Your favours I'll not enjoy, I'll persist however  
So I die in the process and become your creditor.  
Not just in this but also in the other world  
I shall be constant to you, and sold.  
May Sa‘di turn to dust if you do not like his body  
Pity if I am proud of you and you ashamed of me.<sup>4</sup>

## درد عشق

دردیست درد عشق که هیچش طبیب نیست  
گر دردمند عشق بنالد عجیب نیست  
دانند عاقلان که مجانین عشق را  
پروای قول ناصح و پند ادیب نیست  
هر کو شراب عشق نخوردست و درد درد  
آنست کز حیات جهانش نصیب نیست  
در مشک و عود و عنبر و امثال طیبات  
خوش تر ز بوی دوست دگر هیچ طبیب نیست  
صید از کمند اگر بجهد بوالعجب بود  
ور نه چو در کمند همیرد عجیب نیست  
گر دوست واقف است که بر من چه می رود  
باک از جفای دشمن و جور رقیب نیست  
بگریست چشم دشمن من بر حدیث من  
فضل از غریب هست و وفا در قریب نیست  
از خنده گل چنان به قفا اوفتاده باز  
کو را خبر ز مشغله عندلیب نیست  
سعدی ز دست دوست شکایت کجا برب  
هم صبر بر حبیب که صبر از حبیب نیست

### ***The pain of love***

The pain of love is one which has no remedy  
No wonder the afflicted moan of tragedy.  
People of reason know that those madly in love  
Listen not to the advisor and the preacher's advice.  
He who's not drunk with the wine of loving  
Has not experienced the joy of living.  
Musk, aloes wood, ambergris, others such  
None has a better aroma than my beloved much.  
It's unusual for the game to break out of the trap  
But it's not unusual for it to die entrapped.  
If my love knew what's happening to me  
I'd bear the cruelty of the rival and enemy.  
My enemy's eyes wept over my fate  
The stranger sympathises, the friend doesn't.  
The rose is laughing with such relief  
Knowing nothing of the nightingale's grief.  
Sa'di, where can you complain about your beloved  
Be patient with her even though she isn't.<sup>5</sup>

## عشق و شکیبایی

دلی که عاشق و صابر بود مگر سنگ است  
ز عشق تا به صبوری هزار فرسنگ است  
برادران طریقت نصیحتم مکیند  
که توبه در ره عشق آبگینه بر سنگ است  
دگر به خفیه نمی بایدم شراب و سماع  
که نیکنامی در دین عاشقان ننگ است  
چه تربیت شنوم یا چه مصلحت بینم  
مرا که چشم به ساقی و گوش بر چنگ است  
به یادگار کسی دامن نسیم صبا  
گرفته ایم و دریغا که باد در چنگ است  
به خشم رفته ما را که می برد پیغام  
بیا که ما سپر انداختیم اگر جنگ است  
بکش چنانکه توانی که بی مشاهده ات  
فراخنای جهان بر وجود من تنگ است  
ملامت از دل سعدی فرونشوید عشق  
سیاهی از حبسی چون رود که خودرنگ است

### *Love and patience*

Love with patience belongs to a heart of stone  
A thousand miles are between love and patience.  
Stop giving me advice fellow-travellers  
For repentance from love is like glass hit by stone.  
I will no longer drink and dance in secret  
Good name is a sin in the lovers' faith.  
No lesson at all can I be taught  
Seeing the cup-bearer and hearing the lute.  
Thinking of you, I breathe the morning breeze  
But alas it is nothing but air and wind.  
Tell the beloved who's left me in anger  
Even if it's war I am ready to surrender.  
Come and kill me the way you know  
For without you the world's nothing but a blow.  
Blame will not wash love off Sa'di's heart  
Black cannot be washed off someone dark.<sup>6</sup>

## نوبت عاشقی

گفتم آهن دلی کنم چندی  
ندهم دل به هیچ دلبندی  
وانکه را دیده در دهان تو رفت  
هرگزش گوش نشنود پندی  
خاصه ما را که از ازل بودست  
با تو آمیزشی و پیوندی  
به دلت کز دلت بدر نکنم  
سخت تر زین مخواه سوگندی  
یک دم آخر حجاب یک سو نه  
تا برآساید آرزومندی  
همچنان پیر نیست مادر دهر  
که بیاورد چون تو فرزندی  
ریش فرهاد بهترک می بود  
گر نه شیرین نمک پراکندی  
کاشکی خاک بودمی در راه  
تا مگر سایه بر من افکندی  
چه کند بنده ای که از دل و جان  
نکند خدمت خداوندی  
سعدیا دور نیکنامی رفت  
نوبت عاشقیست یکچندی

### ***The turn of loving***

I said I'd get hard-hearted awhile  
Open my heart to no-one for love.  
Yet he who set his eyes on your mouth  
His ears will not hear any advice.  
Especially a lover such as me  
Having loved you from the dawn of time.  
By your heart I'll keep you in my heart  
Better than that I cannot swear by.  
Put aside that veil just for once  
To please a wishful lover at once.  
The world's mother cannot be old  
Of whom was born a child like you.  
Farhad's love wounds would hurt him less  
If Shirin did not pour so much salt on them.<sup>7</sup>  
I wish I lay like dust on the way  
So your shadow would fall on my clay.  
A servant has no choice at all  
Except serving his master in full.  
Sa'di, the time of respectability has passed  
The turn of loving has come to pass.<sup>8</sup>

## عقل ندارد کفایتی

ای از بهشت جزوی و از رحمت آیتی  
حق را به روزگار تو با ما عنایتی  
گفتم نهایتی بود این درد عشق را  
هر بامداد می کند از نو بدایتی  
معروف شد حکایتم اnder جهان و نیست  
با تو مجال آن که بگویم حکایتی  
چندان که با تو غایت امکان صبر بود  
کردیم و عشق را نه پدید است غایتی  
فرمان عشق و عقل به یک جای نشنوند  
غوغای بود دو پادشه اnder ولایتی  
ز ابني روزگار به خوبی ممیزی  
چون در میان لشکر منصور رایتی  
عیت نمی کنم که خداوند امر و نهی  
شاید که بنده ای بکشد بی جنایتی  
زانگه که عشق دست تطاول دراز کرد  
معلوم شد که عقل ندارد کفایتی  
من در پناه لطف تو خواهم گریختن  
فردا که هر کسی رود اnder حمایتی  
درمانده ام که از تو شکایت کجا برم  
هم با تو گر ز دست تو دارم شکایتی  
سعدی نهفته چند بماند حدیث عشق  
این ریش اندرون بکند هم سرایتی

### *Inadequacy of reason*

You, a part of paradise and sign of bliss,  
For Lord's sake of your lover take notice.  
I thought there'd be an end to love's pain  
Yet each morning it comes over me again.  
Famous is now the story of my loving you  
Though I have no chance to share it with you.  
I reached the utmost limit of my patience  
Alas love leaves no limit to endurance.  
Love and reason cannot exist in one place  
Chaos rules in a kingdom with two rulers.  
In goodness you stand up among the multitude  
Just like the standard of a victorious force.  
Killing me without a crime is not a fault  
Slaves *are* occasionally killed thus by their lord.  
As soon as the army of love began its conquest  
The inadequacy of reason became manifest.  
Let me put myself under your protection  
The day everyone is seeking redemption.  
To whom could I possibly complain of you  
If I must, I will have to complain to you.  
Sa'di the tale of your love will not remain secret  
For a wound inside will eventually surface.<sup>9</sup>

من این پیره نم

تا خبر دارم از او بی خبر از خویشتنم  
با وجودش ز من آواز نیاید که منم  
پیره نمی بدرم دم به دم از غایت شوق  
که وجودم همه او گشت و من این پیره نم  
ای رقیب این همه سودا مکن و جنگ مجوى  
برکنم دیده، که من دیده از او برنکنم  
خود گرفتم که نگویم که مرا واقعه ایست  
دشمن و دوست بدانند قیاس از سخنم  
در همه شهر فراهم ننشست انجمنی  
که نه من در غمش افسانه آن انجمنم  
برشکست از من و از رنج دلم باک نداشت  
من نه آنم که توانم که از او برشکنم  
گر همین سوز رود با من مسکین در گور  
خاک اگر باز کنی سوخته یابی کفنم  
گر به خون تشنه ای اینک من و سر باکی نیست  
که به فتراک تو به زانکه بود بر بدنم  
شرط عقل است که مردم بگریزند از تیر  
من گر از دست تو باشد مژه بر هم نزنم  
تا به گفتار در آمد دهن شیرینت  
بیم آن است که شوری به جهان در فکنم  
لب سعدی و دهانت ز کجا تا به کجا  
این قدر بس که رود نام لبت بر دهنم

### *I am just this raiment*

I've forgotten me since I've known her  
She being there means that I am nowhere  
I tear off my raiment a part of the excitement  
That, being inside her, I'm nothing but this raiment.  
Rival! Do not scheme and look for a fight  
Seeing her not I'd rather tear out my eyes  
Suppose I deny facing a dilemma  
Friend and foe will know it from my librettos.  
All and sundry know the legend of my love  
My loving her is the legend of the town  
She broke with me regardless that I suffer  
How can I break with her, I wonder.  
If they bury me with this burning flame  
Open my grave and see the shroud is burnt  
If you thirst for blood here take my head  
It is better in your hands than on my shoulders.  
People of reason run away from love's arrow  
If it comes from you I will not move at all  
Soon as your sweet mouth opened to talk  
I am afraid my enthusiasm made me choke.  
Sa‘di’s lips and your mouth, what a distance  
I am content with my mouth mentioning your lips.<sup>10</sup>

## کبوتر و باز

شب عاشقان بیدل چه شبی دراز باشد  
تو بیا کز اول شب در صبح باز باشد  
عجب است اگر توانم که سفر کنم ز دستت  
به کجا رود کبوتر که اسیر باز باشد؟  
ز محبت نخواهم که نظر کنم به رویت  
که محب صادق آن است که پاکباز باشد  
به کرشمه ای عنایت نظری به سوی ما کن  
که دعای دردمندان ز سر نیاز باشد  
سخنی که نیست طاقت که ز خویشتن بپوشم  
به کدام دوست گویم که محل راز باشد؟  
چه نماز باشد آن را که تو در خیال باشی  
تو صنم نمی گذاری که مرا نماز باشد  
نه چنین حساب کردم چو تو دوست می گرفتم  
که ثنا و مدح گوییم و جفا و ناز باشد  
دگرش چو باز بینی غم دل مگوی سعدی  
که شب وصال کوتاه و سخن دراز باشد  
قدمی که برگرفتی به وفا و عهد یاران  
اگر از بلا بترسی قدم مجاز باشد

### ***Dove and hawk***

The night of selfless lovers is too long  
Come my love so we'll have morning from the start.  
There's nowhere I'd be able to run from you  
Where can a dove go from the claws of a hawk?  
So deep is my love that I bear not to see your face  
A selfless lover must after all be honest.  
Do throw a glance at me by a kind gesture  
Since it's necessity that makes sufferers pray.  
The word that I cannot bear to hide from myself  
To whom shall I take it to keep as a secret?  
With you in mind my ritual prayer is void  
The idol in you stops me saying it at all.  
I did not reckon, when seeking your love,  
That while I adore you, you will not care.  
Next time you see her, Sa‘di, don't open your heart  
For the night of union is short, and the talk long.  
The step you take towards the beloved  
Will be false if you are afraid of a bad end.<sup>11</sup>

من توبه نمی کنم  
گر من ز محبتت بهمیرم  
دامن به قیامتت بگیرم  
از دنیی و آخرت گزیر است  
وز صحبت دوست ناگزیرم  
ای مرهم ریش دردمندان  
درمان دگر نمی پذیرم  
آن کس که به جز تو کس ندارد  
در هر دو جهان، من آن فقیرم  
ای محتسب از جوان چه خواهی؟

من توبه نمی کنم که پیرم  
یک روز کمان ابروانش  
می بوسم و گو بزن به تیرم  
ای باد بهار عنبرین بوی  
در پای لطافت تو میرم  
چون می گذری به خاک شیراز  
گو من به فلان زمین اسیرم  
در خواب نمی روم که بی دوست  
پهلو نه خوش است با حریرم  
ای مونس روزگار سعدی  
رفتی و نرفتی از ضمیرم

### *I shall not repent*

If I die of your love in this world  
I'll hold you to account in the next world  
One can choose between this and the other world  
But I have no choice other than my beloved.  
You are a remedy to everyone's ills  
No remedy except your love please  
He who has no-one but you in the two worlds  
Is me, the poor beggar among all.  
Religious police stop troubling the young!  
Even *I* will not repent being old, not young  
One day I'll kiss the bows of her eyebrows  
And then I'll be ready to kiss her arrows.  
Tell the fragrant spring breeze  
For whose tenderness I am ready to die  
To tell my love when passing through Shiraz  
That your lover is captive in some other place.  
I am sleepless because without my beloved  
Beside me, I cannot even rest in a silk bed  
Sweet beloved of Sa'di's entire life!  
You are gone, but are still on my mind.<sup>12</sup>

## شهربند عشق

هر شب اندیشه دیگر کنم و رای دگر  
که من از دست تو فردا بروم جای دگر  
بامدادن که برون می نهم از منزل پای  
حسن عهدم نگذارد که نهم پای دگر  
هر کسی را سر چیزی و تمنای کسیست  
ما به غیر از تو نداریم تمنای دگر  
زانکه هرگز به جمال تو در آیینه وهم  
متصور نشود صورت و بالای دگر  
وامقی بود که دیوانه عذرایی بود  
منم امروز و تویی، وامق و عذرای دگر  
وقت آن است که صحرا گل و سنبل گیرد  
خلق بیرون شده هر قوم به صحرای دگر  
بامدادان به تماشای چمن بیرون آی  
تا فراغ از تو نماند به تماشای دگر  
هر صباحی غمی از دست زمان پیش آید  
گوییم این نیز نهم بر سر غم های دگر  
باز گوییم که نه دوران حیات این همه نیست  
سعدی امروز تحمل کن و فردای دگر

### *Captive to love*

Every day and night I almost decide  
To give up your love and leave town  
Yet as soon as I set foot out of my home  
Constancy stops me from leaving you alone.  
They all desire something or someone  
Other than you, I desire no-one  
Because not even in the mirror of illusion  
Will one as beautiful as you enter the imagination.  
In legend Vameq was mad about Azra  
I am now another Vameq, and you another Azra  
It is the season of rose and nightingale  
Everyone is outdoors to enjoy the air.  
Come in the morning to see the green grass  
So I will not see it away from your pass  
Each day I am seized by the sadness of love  
I say let's load this upon what's already gone.  
But then I say no, Sa'di, life is short  
Try to put up with it more and more.<sup>13</sup>

## در دامنت آویزد

هشیار کسی باید کز عشق بپرهیزد  
وین طبع که من دارم با عقل نیامیزد  
آن کس که دلی دارد آراسته معنی  
گر هر دو جهان باشد در پای یکی ریزد  
گر سیل عقاب آید شوریده نیندیشد  
ور تیر بلا بارد دیوانه نپرهیزد  
آخر نه منم تنها در بادیه سودا  
عشق لب شیرینت بس شور برانگیزد  
بی بخت چه غم سازم تا برخورم از وصلت؟  
بی مایه زبون باشد هر چند که بستیزد  
فضل است اگرم خوانی، عدل است اگرم رانی  
قدر تو نداند آن کز زجر تو بگریزد  
تا دل به تو پیوستم راه همه در بستم  
جایی که تو بنشینی بس فتنه که برخیزد  
سعدی نظر از رویت کوته نکند هرگز  
ور روی بگردانی در دامنت آویزد

*On his knees*

Careful is one who shuns the lovers' season  
Alas my nature cannot bear the coldness of reason.  
He whose heart is adorned with pure truth  
Will deliver both worlds to the one he adores.  
A flood of eagles will not frighten a lover  
Just as a rain of arrows will not deter a mad fighter.  
I am after all not alone in the realm of compassion  
The love of your sweet lips also raises passion.  
My bad luck does not allow me to have you  
Hard as he tries, what can a poor man do?  
Taking me will be virtuous, rejecting me just  
He is not a true lover who runs from your wrath.  
Since I've come to you all doors are shut  
Wherever you are, riot breaks out.  
Sa'di will not stop staring at your face  
And will hold your lap if you turn your face.<sup>14</sup>

## کدام عیب؟

کس این کند که دل از یار خویش بردارد؟  
مگر کسی که دل از سنگ سخت تر دارد  
که گفت من خبری دارم از حقیقت عشق  
دروغ گفت گر از خویشن خبر دارد  
اگر نظر به دو عالم کند حرامش باد  
که از صفاتی درون با یکی نظر دارد  
هلاک ما به بیابان عشق خواهد بود  
کجاست مرد که با ما سفر دارد  
گر از مقابله شیر آید از عقب شمشیر  
نه عاشق است که اندیشه از خطر دارد  
وگر بهشت مصور کنند عاشق را  
به غیر دوست نشاید که دیده بردارد  
از آن متاع که در پای دوستان ریزند  
مرا سریست ندانم که او چه سر دارد؟  
دریغ پای که بر خاک می نهد معشوق  
چرا نه بر سر و بر چشم ما گذر دارد؟  
عوام عیب کنند که عاشقی سعدی  
کدام عیب که سعدی خود این هنر دارد  
نظر به روی تو انداختن حرامش باد  
که جز تو در همه عالم کسی دگر دارد

### ***What fault?***

Would anyone give up loving his sweetheart?  
He would who has a heart stone-hard  
The lover who claims to know true love  
Lies if he cares at all for his own self.  
He who is in love from the bottom of his heart  
Cannot love anything else, even the two worlds  
Our death is surely in the wilderness of love  
What gallant man will keep us company?  
If lions come from the front, swords from behind,  
He is not a true lover who would for a second mind  
And if they bring paradise itself before his eyes  
The true lover will not take his eyes off his beloved.  
I only have my head to put at my sweetheart's feet  
And I wonder what *she* will think of it  
Sadly, she rambles on plain dust  
I wish she'd walk on me if she must.  
The ignorant blame Sa'di's fault for love  
This is not a fault but an asset that I've got  
Anyone who has anyone but you  
Does not at all deserve to love you.<sup>15</sup>

داستانیست که بر هر سر بازاری هست  
مشنو ای دوست که غیر از تو مرا یاری هست  
یا شب و روز به جز فکر توام کاری هست  
به کمند سر زلفت نه من افتادم و بس  
که به هر حلقه موییت گرفتاری هست  
گر بگویم که مرا با تو سر و کاری نیست  
در و دیوار گواهی بدهد کاری هست  
هر که عییم کند از عشق و ملامت گوید  
تا ندیدست ترا بر منش انکاری هست  
صبر بر جور رقیبت چه کنم گر نکنم؟  
همه دانند که در صحبت گل خاری هست  
نه من خام طمع عشق تو می ورم و بس  
که چو من سوخته در خیل تو بسیاری هست  
باد خاکی ز مقام تو بیاورد و ببرد  
آب هر طیب که در کلبه عطاری هست  
من چه در پای تو ریزم که پسند تو بود  
جان و سر را نتوان گفت که مقداری هست  
من از این دلق مرقع بدرآیم روزی  
تا همه خلق بدانند که زناری هست  
همه را هست همین داغ محبت که مراست  
که نه مستم من و در دور تو هشیاری هست  
عشق سعدی نه حدیثیست که پنهان ماند  
داستانیست که بر هر سر بازاری هست

*A tale told at every corner*

Do not believe, my love, that I have any other  
Or that day and night about anything else I bother.  
I was caught in the lasso of your long hair  
Like others entrapped in its every curl.  
Suppose I pretend not to care about you  
The whole world will bear witness that I do.  
He who blames me for being in love  
Will stop it when he sets eyes on you my love.  
I'll bear the oppression of my rival for loving you  
Wanting a flower, one must bear its thorns too.  
I am not the only one who longs for you  
Multitudes have been burnt in your milieu.  
When the wind blows the dust from your home  
Its fragrance fills the air better than perfume.  
What shall I offer you that may please you?  
I cannot claim that my life is worthy of you.  
One day I shall take off my patched raiment  
So all will see the cross which I wear under it.  
We all suffer from bearing the brand of your love  
I am not the only drunk; there is hardly a sober one.  
Sa‘di’s love is not such that can be under cover  
It is a tale that they tell at every corner.<sup>16</sup>

## بیرم بار گرانت

چه لطیف است قبا بر تن چون سرو روانت  
آه اگر چون کمرم دست رسیدی به میانت  
در دم هیچ نیاید مگر اندیشه وصلت  
تو نه آنی که دگر کس بنشیند به مکانت  
گر تو خواهی که یکی را سخن تلخ بگویی  
سخن تلخ نباشد چو برآید به دهانت  
نه من انگشت نمایم به هواداری رویت  
که تو انگشت نمایی و خلائق نگرانت  
در اندیشه ببستم قلم وهم شکستم  
که تو زیباتر از آنی که کنم وصف و بیانت  
سرو را قامت خوب است و قمر را رخ زیبا  
تونه آنی و نه اینی، که هم این است و هم آنت  
ای رقیب ار نگشایی در دلبند به رویم  
این قدر باز نمایی که دعا گفت فلانت  
من همه عمر بر آنم که دعاگوی تو باشم  
گر تو باشی که نباشم تن من برخی جانت  
سعدیا چاره ثبات است و مدارا و تحمل  
من که محتاج تو باشم بیرم بار گرانت

***Let me not be***

How soft is the garment on your figure  
How I wish I could embrace you like your belt  
Naught can I think of but having you  
For no-one can ever compete with you.  
If you speak of anyone with bitterness  
It'll not be bitter as it leaves your lips  
Not only am I notorious for loving you  
You too are notorious, with multitudes watching you.  
I've stopped thinking and given up all illusion  
For you are too beautiful to locate in a vision  
The moon's pretty, the cypress tree is elegant  
You are neither as you are like them both.  
O rival if you stop me from seeing her  
Tell her at least that I prayed for her  
All my life, my love, I'll pray for you to be  
If your existence excludes mine, let it be.  
There's no choice, Sa'di, but forbearance  
Now that you need her, bear it with patience.<sup>17</sup>

## عشق بی خود

مرا خود با تو چیزی در میان هست  
وگرنه روی زیبا در جهان هست  
وجودی دارم از مهرت گدازان  
وجودم رفت و مهرت همچنان هست  
میر ظن کز سرم سودای عشقت  
رود، تا بر زمینم استخوان هست  
اگر پیشم نشینی دل نشانی  
وگر غایب شوی در دل نشان هست  
بگفتن راست ناید شرح حسنت  
ولیکن گفت خواهم تا زبان هست  
ندانم قامت است آن یا قیامت  
که می گوید چنین سرو روان هست  
توان گفتن به مه مانی ولی ماه  
نپندارم چنین شیرین دهان هست  
جز پیشت نخواهم سر نهادن  
اگر بالین نباشد آستان هست  
برو سعدی که کوی وصل یاران  
نه بازاریست کانجا قدر جان هست

### *Selfless love*

For you I feel something, something special  
And not just because you look pretty.  
My whole being is burning with your love  
I have ceased to be, but there still is your love.  
Do not believe that I will leave you alone  
For as long as in my body there is a bone.  
Come, and you will live in my heart  
Go, and you'll be remembered by it.  
No tongue can quite describe your beauty  
But as long as I have a tongue it'll be my duty.  
The beauty of your figure is a source of wonder,  
It proves that there are moving cypress trees.  
Your face may be likened to the moon  
But the moon cannot speak sweet words.  
I will not rest next to anyone but you  
At your feet, if not on your pillow.  
Give up, Sa'di, for in the bazaar of love  
They do not put any value on men's life.<sup>18</sup>

## عقل بیچاره

زانگه که بر آن صورت خوبم نظر افتاد  
از صورت بی طاقتی ام پرده برافتد  
گفتیم که عقل از همه کاری بدرآید  
بیچاره فرو ماند چو عشقش بدر افتاد  
شمshire کشیدست نظر بر سر مردم  
چون پای بدارم که ز دستم سپر افتاد؟  
در سوخته پنهان نتوان داشتن آتش  
ما هیچ نگفتیم و حکایت بدر افتاد  
با هر که خبر گفتم از اوصاف جمیلش  
مشتاق چنان شد که چو من بی خبر افتاد  
هان تا لب شیرین نستاند دلت از دست  
کان کز غم او کوه گرفت از کمر افتاد  
صاحب نظران این نفس گرم چو آتش  
دانند که در خرمن من بیشتر افتاد  
نیکم نظر افتاد بر آن منظر مطبوع  
کاول نظم هر چه وجود از نظر افتاد  
سعدی نه حریف غم او بود ولیکن  
با رستم دستان بزند هر که درافتاد

### ***Poor reason***

Ever since I set eyes on that beautiful face  
It became clear that I had lost patience  
I had thought that reason could cope  
Poor reason lost out to love's onslaught.  
She's drawn the dagger of love on her lovers  
I have dropped the shield and am defenceless  
You cannot hide fire in what is burning  
My love was thus exposed without a warning.  
Whoever I told about her wonderful aspects  
Fell for her and like me became unconscious  
Be careful that you do not fall for the lips of Shirin  
For even a hero like Farhad they brought down.  
The enlightened know that her fiery breath  
Set fire to my harvest more than others  
The minute I saw that garden of beauty  
I could not possibly watch another body.  
Sa'di could not bear the sadness of her love  
Which you must be a Rostam to be able to fight.<sup>19</sup>

اندازه ندارد که چه شیرین سخنی  
پیش رویت دگران صورت بر دیوارند  
نه چنین صورت و معنی که تو داری دارند  
تا گل روی تو دیدم همه گلها خارند  
تا ترا یار گرفتم همه خلق اغیارند  
آن که گویند به عمری شب قدری باشد  
مگر آن است که با دوست به پایان آرند  
دامن دولت جاوید و گریبان امید  
حیف باشد که بگیرند و دگر بگذارند  
نه من از دست نگارین تو مجروح و بس  
که به شمشیر غمت کشته چو من بسیارند  
عجب از چشم تو دارم که شبانگه تا روز  
خواب می گیرد و شهری ز غمت بیدارند  
بوالعجب واقعه ای باشد و مشکل دردی  
که نه پوشیده توان گفت نه گفتن یارند  
یعلم الله که خیالی ز تنم بیش نماند  
بلکه آن نیز خیالیست که می پندارند  
سعدی اندازه ندارد که چه شیرین سخنی  
باغ طبعت همه مرغان شکرگفتارند  
تا به بستان ضمیرت گل معنی بشکفت  
بلبلان از تو فرومانده چو بوتیمارند

### *How sweet is your poetry*

Beside your face others are pictures on the wall  
None has the face and depth of you at all  
With the flower of your face all flowers are thistles  
Having taken you as friend all others are strangers.  
They say one night of life is the Sacred Night  
It must be the night that is spent at your side  
It'll be a pity to sacrifice amorous success  
To any and all things else.  
With your lovely hands you've not just injured me  
Killed like me by your sabre are many  
I am astonished at your eye that every night  
Falls asleep while a whole town is awake for your love.  
It's something strange, a difficult pain  
That can be neither hidden nor explained  
God knows that I am nothing but your thought  
Although even that is far from thought.  
Sa'di, your words are sweeter than sugar  
The garden of your poetry is filled with singing birds  
Ever since roses have sprouted in your mind's garden  
Nightingales have lost the art of competition.<sup>20</sup>

## خاک بازار نیرزم

بخت آیینه ندارم که در او می نگری  
خاک بازار نیرزم که بر او می گذری  
من چنان عاشق رویت که ز خود بی خبرم  
تو چنان فتنه خویشی که ز ما بی خبری  
به چه ماننده کنم در همه آفاق ترا  
کانچه در وهم من آید تو از آن خوب تری  
برقع از پیش چنین روی نشاید برداشت  
که به هر گوشه چشمی دل خلقی ببری  
دیده ای را که به دیدار تو دل می نرود  
هیچ علت نتوان گفت مگر بی بصری  
به فلک می رود آه سحر از سینه ما  
تو همی بر نکنی دیده ز خواب سحری  
خفتگان را خبر از محنت بیداران نیست  
تا غمت پیش نیاید غم مردم نخوری  
هر چه در وصف تو گویند به نیکویی هست  
عیب آنست که هر روز به طبعی دگری  
گر تو از پرده برون آیی و رخ بنمایی  
پرده از کار همه پرده نشینان بدروی  
عذر سعدی ننهد هر که ترا نشناسد  
حال دیوانه نداند که ندیدست پری

*I am not worth the dust beneath your feet*

My luck is not a mirror at which you may look  
My person is not worth the dust on which you may walk  
I love you so much that I have forgotten me  
You are so full of yourself that you are unaware of me.  
To what can I liken you in the whole world  
For you are better than anything in my thought  
He is surely struck by a fit of blindness  
Who does not lose himself on seeing your face.  
I thought I would leave town to forget you  
But I cannot, since I see you everywhere I go  
Our sighs rise up to the skies at dawn  
You will not even open your eyes at dawn.  
Sleepers are unaware of the pain of the sleepless  
For a carefree person does not sense the cares of others  
All that they say in your praise is right  
Except that you keep changing your mind.  
If you remove the purdah and show your face  
You will expose the secrets of all purdah-dwellers  
Those who do not know you will admonish Sa‘di:  
A madman is blamed by those who are not bewitched.<sup>21</sup>

سخت تر از سنگ  
گر کنم در سر وفات سری  
سهل باشد زیان مختص‌ری  
ای که قصد هلاک من داری  
صبر کن تا ببینم نظری  
نه حرام است در رخ تو نظر  
که حرام است چشم بر دگری  
دوست دارم که خاک پات شوم  
تا مگر بر سرم کنی گذری  
متحیر نه در جمال توام  
عقل دارم به قدر خود قدری  
حیرتم در صفات بی چون است  
کاین کمال آفرید در بشری  
ببری هوش و طاقت زن و مرد  
گر تردد کنی به بام و دری ...  
آه سعدی اثر کند در کوه  
نکند در تو سنگدل اثری  
سنگ را سخت گفتمی همه عمر  
تا بدیدم ز سنگ سخت تری

### ***Harder than stone***

It would be but a small loss  
To lose my head for your love  
Since you are bent on killing me  
Let me at least see you for a while.  
Looking at your face is not forbidden [*haram*]  
It's looking at another that's forbidden  
I wish to turn into dust at your threshold  
So that you would step on my head.  
I am not puzzled by your beauty  
Since I do have some sense in me  
I am puzzled at God's qualities  
That created such a perfect being.  
Anyone anywhere who sets eyes on thee  
Will be lost by your dazzling beauty...  
Even hills are affected by Sa'di's sigh  
Alas, it has no effect on your stone heart.  
All my life I said stones were hard, unawares  
That some hearts may be harder than stones.<sup>22</sup>

همچنان طبум جوانی می کند  
هر که بی او زندگانی می کند  
گر نمی میرد گرانی می کند  
من بر آن بودم که ندهم دل به عشق  
سروبالا دلستانی می کند  
مهربانی می نمایم بر قدش  
سنگدل نامهربانی می کند  
برف پیری می نشیند بر سرم  
همچنان طبум جوانی می کند  
ماجرای دل نمی گفتم به خلق  
آب چشمم ترجمانی می کند  
آهن افسرده می کوبد که جهد  
با قضای آسمانی می کند  
عقل را با عشق زور پنجه نیست  
احتمال از ناتوانی می کند  
چشم سعدی در امید روی یار  
چون دهانش درفشانی می کند  
هم بود شوری در این سر بی خلاف  
کاین همه شیرین زبانی می کند

### *I still feel young*

He who lives without her  
And does not die is obdurate.  
I was determined to avoid loving  
It is she who did the enticing.  
I am worshipping her body  
Stone-hearted, she ignores me.  
My head is turning snow white  
But I still feel just as young.  
I would not have opened up my heart  
But I was exposed by the tears in my eyes.  
He who struggles against his fate  
Is beating iron with his head.  
Reason cannot overcome love  
It just hopelessly tries.  
Longing to see her, Sa‘di’s eyes  
Drop pearls as does her mouth.  
He must indeed be full of passion  
Who has such a sweet expression.<sup>23</sup>

عیش را بی تو عیش نتوان گفت  
زنده بی دوست خفته در وطنی  
مثل مرده ایست در کفنه  
عیش را بی تو عیش نتوان گفت  
چه بود بی وجود روح تنی؟  
تا صبا می رود به بستان ها  
چون تو سروی نیافت در چمنی  
و آفتایی خلاف امکان است  
که بر آید ز جیب پیرهنه  
وآن شکن بر شکن قبایل زلف  
که بلایست زیر هر شکنی  
بر سر کوی عشق بازاریست  
که نیارد هزار جان ژمنی  
جای آن است اگر ببخشایی  
که نبینی فقیرتر ز منی  
هفت کشور نمی کنند امروز  
بی مقالات سعدی انجمنی  
از دو بیرون نه: یا دلت سنگ است  
یا به گوشت نمی رسد سخنی

*No joy in living without you*

Sleeping in an abode without the beloved  
Is just like a dead person wrapped in a shroud  
Living cannot be called living without you  
For what worth is a body without a soul?  
Ever since the morning passed through the fields  
I have not found a cypress tree like you indeed  
And it is unbelievable that the sun  
Would rise from an open-necked gown.  
And there is that chain of your long hair  
Which hides a sedition under each of its curls  
In the streets of love there is a bazaar  
Where a thousand lives are not worth a dime.  
I really deserve to receive your alms  
For you will find none poorer than me likewise  
Today no groups gather in the seven realms  
Where they do not recite Sa‘di’s Persian pearls.  
Either you have a heart made of stone  
Or my pleas don’t reach your ears at all.<sup>24</sup>

## بلای عشق تو

نرفت تا تو برفتی خیالت از نظرم  
برفت در همه عالم به بی دلی خبرم  
نه بخت و دولت آنم که با تو بنشینم  
نه صبر و طاقت آنم که از تو درگذرم  
من از تو روی نخواهم به دیگری آورد  
که زشت باشد هر روز قبله دگرم  
بلای عشق تو بر من چنان اثر کردست  
که پند عالم و عابد نمی کند اثرم  
قیامتم که به دیوان حشر پیش آرند  
میان آن همه تشویش در تو می نگرم  
به جان دوست که چون دوست در برم باشد  
هزار دشمن اگر بر سرند غم نخورم  
نشان پیکر خوبت نمی توانم داد  
که در تامل او خیره می شود بصرم  
تو نیز اگر نشناسی مرا عجب نبود  
که هر چه در نظر آید از آن ضعیفترم  
به جان و سر که نگردانم از وصال تو روی  
وگر هزار ملامت رسد به جان و سرم  
مرا مگوی که سعدی چرا پریشانی  
خيال روی تو بر می کند به یکدگرم

### *The heartbreak of your love*

I still think of you even if you care not  
The whole world has learned of my lonely lot  
Neither do I have the luck to be with you  
Nor the patience to forget about you.  
I cannot leave you for anyone anyway  
Since I cannot have a Ka'ba every day  
The heartbreak of your love has struck me such  
That no amount of advice can make me give up.  
At the Resurrection when they bring me to the book  
Amidst all the fear for you I will still look  
I swear by my friend that when she is with me  
I will not worry even if I have a thousand enemies.  
I cannot possibly say how fine is your body  
Since I keep gazing at it instead of looking  
And no wonder if you too do not recognise me  
Since I am much less than anyone can be.  
I'll not stop seeking you, by my life and mind,  
Even if my life and mind are showered with reprimand  
Do not ask me, 'Sa'di, why are you despondent?'  
It's because the thought of you turns my temperament.<sup>25</sup>

چون دوست دشمن است  
بگذار تا مقابل روی تو بگذریم  
دزدیده در شمایل خوب تو بنگریم  
شوق است در جدایی و جور است در نظر  
هم جور به که طاقت شوقت نیاوریم  
روی ار به روی ما نکنی حکم از آن توست  
باز آ که روی در قدمانت بگستیریم  
ما را سریست با تو که گر خلق روزگار  
دشمن شوند و سر ببرود هم بر آن سریم  
گفتی ز خاک بیشترند اهل عشق من  
از خاک بیشتر نه که از خاک کمتریم  
ما با تو ایم و با تو نه ایم اینت بولعجب  
در حلقه ایم با تو و چون حلقه بر دریم  
نه بوی مهر می شنویم از تو ای عجب  
نه روی آنکه دگر کس بپروریم  
از دشمنان برنند حکایت به دوستان  
چون دوست دشمن است شکایت کجا بریم؟  
ما خود نمی رویم دوان از قفای کس  
آن می برد که ما به کمند وی اندریم  
سعدی تو کیستی که در این حلقه کمند  
چندان فتاده اند که ما صید لاغریم

### *When a friend is the enemy*

Do let me pass by your face  
And steal a look from that beautiful space  
Separation brings longing, but seeing hurts  
I like the hurt since I cannot bear to wait.  
It is your privilege not to look at my face  
At least step on my face for God's sake  
My head is at your feet and even if enemies  
Cut it off it will still be there, at your feet.  
You said your lovers are more than dust  
Not more, we are in fact less than dust  
Strange that I am both with you and without you  
Apparently one with you and yet far from you.  
I neither receive the fragrance of love from you  
Nor have the courage to choose someone to replace you  
They complain of their enemies to their friends  
When a friend is the enemy, to whom shall I protest?  
I am not running after her by my own free will  
I am caught in her lasso and pulled without help  
Sa'di in the loop of this lasso are prisoners  
Beside whom you are but an insignificant game.<sup>26</sup>

## مگر تو روی بپوشی

کسی که روی تو دیدست حال من داند  
که هر که دل به تو پرداخت صبر نتواند  
مگر تو روی بپوشی و گر نه ممکن نیست  
که آدمی که تو بیند نظر بپوشاند  
هر آفریده که چشمش بر این جمال افتاد  
دلش ببخشد و بر جانت آفرین خواند  
اگر به دست کند با غبان چنین سروی  
چه جای چشمکه که بر چشمهاش بنشاند  
چه روزها به شب آورد جان منتظرم  
ببوی آنکه شبی با تو روز گرداند  
به چند حیله شبی در فراق روز کنم  
و گر نبینمت آن روز هم به شب ماند  
جفا و سلطنتت می رسد ولی می‌سند  
که گر سوار براند پیاده در ماند  
به دست رحمتم از خاک آستان بردار  
که گر بیفکنیم کس به هیچ نستاند  
چه حاجت است به شمشیر قتل عاشق را  
حدیث دوست بگویش که جان برافشاند  
پیام اهل دل است این خبر که سعدی داد  
نه هر که گوش کند معنی سخن داند

### ***Unless you cover your face***

He who has seen your face would know how I feel  
Since anyone who fell in love with you could not sit still  
It is impossible to take one's eyes off your face  
Unless you cover it and thus hide your face.  
Anyone whose eyes fell on that beauty  
Would heartily admire your whole being  
If the gardener tries to plant such a cypress tree  
He would plant it not in a spring but in his own eye.  
How many nights my longing ended in day  
In the hope that I spend a night with you till day  
I try to bring the night of separation somehow to day  
But it turns into night when I don't see you on the day.  
I endure your unkindness and royal pride  
But do not let the horse ride and the pawn stay behind.  
Take me off the dust with your blessed hand  
Since if you don't no-one will give me a hand  
What use is killing a lover with the sword of love?  
Tell him, instead, the story of love so his spirits lift up.  
This was a message from lovers which Sa'di brought  
Though it will not give any listener food for thought.<sup>27</sup>

اکنون که بسوختش خطر نیست

گر صبر دل از تو هست و گر نیست

هم صبر که چاره دگر نیست

ای خواجه به کوی دلستانان

زنhar مرو که ره به در نیست

دانند جهانیان که در عشق

اندیشه عقل معتبر نیست

گویند به جانبی دگر رو

وز جانب او عزیزتر نیست

گرد همه بوستان بگشتم

بر هیچ درخت از این ثمر نیست

من در خور تو چه تحفه آرم؟

جان است و بهای یک نظر نیست

دانی که خبر ز عشق دارد؟

آن کز همه عالمش خبر نیست

سعدی چو امید وصل باقیست

اندیشه جان و بیم سر نیست

پروانه زعشق بر خطر بود

اکنون که بسوختش خطر نیست

*Only ashes beyond the burning*

Whether or not my heart is patient in loving  
Let it be patient for there is no other remedy.  
Friend, try not to go to where loved ones live  
For you will find no possible way out of it  
They all know in the world that in loving  
There is no room at all for reasoning.  
They tell me to seek another lover  
But no-one is as adorable as her  
I have explored the whole of the orchard  
But no tree bears fruit quite like the beloved.  
What gift worthy of you can I bring you?  
For I have just a life which is not worth a look by you  
Do you know who really understands love?  
He who is completely unaware of the world.  
Sa‘di, since you still hope for a union  
Fear not of losing your life for it brings no fear  
The loving moth was in danger of the candle’s wrath  
Now that the candle has burnt it the danger has passed.<sup>28</sup>

عشق اختراع من نبود  
عشقبازی نه من آخر به جهان آوردم  
یا گناهیست که اول من مسکین کردم  
تو که از صورت حال دل ما بی خبری  
غم دل با تو نگویم که ندانی دردم  
ای که پندم دهی از عشق و ملامت گویی  
تو نبودی که من این جام محبت خوردم  
تو برو مصلحت خویشتن اندیش که من  
ترک جان دادم از این پیش که دل بسپردم  
عهد کردیم که جان در سر کار تو کنیم  
وگر این عهد به پایان نبرم نامردم  
من که روی از همه عالم به وصالت کردم  
شرط انصاف نباشد که بمانی فردم  
راست خواهی تو مرا شیفته می گردانی  
گرد عالم به چنین روز نه من می گردم  
خاک نعلین تو ای دوست نمی یارم شد  
تا بر آن دامن عصمت ننشیند گردم  
روز دیوان جزا دست من و دامن تو  
تا بگویی دل سعدی به چه جرم آزردم

### *I did not invent love*

Loving, after all, was not my invention  
Nor sinning that miserable I first committed  
I will not tell you about the pain in my heart  
Since you do not even know what is in my heart.  
O Preacher who scolds me for loving  
Where were you when I drank the wine of loving?  
You go and think what's best for your life  
Since I gave up my life the minute I fell in love.  
I pledged my life to the love of my lover  
If I break it I will not be a man worthy of love  
I turned away from the whole world for having you  
It will not be fair if you keep me longing for you.  
It was you who sent me round the world bewitched  
I am not running round the world of my own free will  
I dare not wish to turn into the dust of your shoes, beloved  
Lest as dust I would pollute your clean, sinless garment.  
In the Day of Judgement I'll hold your hand  
And ask why you hurt Sa‘di’s heart in this world.<sup>29</sup>

که من از عشق توبه نتوانم  
بس که در منظر تو حیرانم  
صورت را صفت نمی دانم  
پارسایان ملامتم مکنید

که من از عشق توبه نتوانم  
هر که بینی به جسم و جان زنده است  
من به امید وصل جانانم  
به چه کار آید این بقیت جان

که به معشوق بر نیفشانم؟  
گر تو از من عنان بگردانی  
من به شمشیر برزنگردانم  
گر بخوانی مقیم درگاهم

ور برانی مطیع فرمانم  
من نه آنم که سست بازآیم  
ور ز سختی به لب رسد جانم  
گر اجابت کنی و گر نکنی

چاره من دعاست، می خوانم  
سهول باشد صعوبت ظلمات  
گر به دست آید آب حیوانم  
تا کی آخر جفا بری سعدی؟

چه کنم پای بند احسانم  
کار مردان تحمل است و سکون  
من کیم؟ خاک پای مردانم

*I cannot repent of loving you*

I am so bewitched by your look  
That I cannot describe how you look  
I just cannot repent of loving  
Let the pious keep scolding.  
People live by their bodies and souls  
And I, by being with her body and soul,  
No use would be for what life I have left  
Except if I give it to the one close to my chest.  
If you turn the rein away from me my love  
Not even a sword could turn me away from love  
If you summon me, I'll be ready at your feet  
And if you reject me I'll be your obedient servant.  
I am not one who would lightly go away  
Even if I am driven to the point of death  
Whether you accept me or let me go  
My only hope will be praying for you.  
In pitch dark it is difficult to see  
But it's easy, looking for that immortal beauty  
Till when, Sa'di, will you bear unkindness?  
Perhaps till you die with lovesickness.  
Real men are at peace and tolerate hardship  
Who am I? The dust of real men's feet.<sup>30</sup>

قدم بر دو چشم سعدی نه  
به کوی لاله رخان هر که عشقباز آید  
امید نیست که دیگر به عقل بازآید  
کبوتری که دگر آشیان نخواهد دید  
قضا همی بردش تا به چنگ باز آید  
ندانم ابروی شوخت چگونه محرابیست  
که گر ببیند زندیق در نماز آید  
بزرگوار مقامي و نیکبخت کسی  
که هر دم از در او چون تویی فراز آید  
ترش نباشم اگر صد جواب تلخ دهی  
که از دهان تو شیرین و دلنواز آید  
بیا و گونه زردم ببین و نقش بخوان  
که گر حدیث کنم قصه ای دراز آید  
خروشم از تف سینه است و ناله از سر درد  
نه چون دگر سخنان کز سر مجاز آید  
به جای خاک قدم بر دو چشم سعدی نه  
که هر که چون تو گرامی بود به ناز آید

*Let your presence light up Sa‘di’s eyes*

Anyone passing by the lovers’ lane  
Will try to return to reason in vain.  
The bird in the claws of an eagle  
Will never see her nest again.  
Your eyebrow is like an altar  
That would call an infidel to prayer.  
How exalted and happy must be  
He who has you each moment to see.  
I won’t be upset at your bitter words  
Sweet as they are from a mouth like yours.  
Come and read the sadness off my yellow face  
For if I tell the story it will take years.  
I am shouting of heart- and mourning of head-ache  
These are not just words that come from the mouth.  
Put your feet not on dust but on Sa‘di’s eyes  
Anyone as good as you must be a coquette and enticing.<sup>31</sup>

من توبه شکستم

گر خلق بگویند که من عاشق و مستم

آوازه درست است که من توبه شکستم

گر دشمنم ایدا کند و دوست ملامت

من فارغم از هر چه بگویند که هستم

ای نفس که مطلوب تو ناموس و ریا بود

از بند تو برخاستم و خوش بنشستم

از روی نگارین تو بیزارم اگر من

تا روی تو دیدم به دگر کس نگرستم

زین پیش بر آمیختمی با همه مردم

تا یار بدیدم در اغیار ببستم

ای ساقی از آن پیش که مستم کنی از می

من خود ز نظر در قد و بالای تو مستم

شبها گزرد بر من از اندیشه رویت

تا روز نه من خفته نه همسایه ز دستم

حیف است سخن گفتن با هر کس از آن لب

دشنام به من ۵۵ که درودت بفرستم

دیریست که سعدی به دل از عشق تو می گفت

این بت نه عجب باشد اگر من بپرستم

بند همه غم های جهان بر دل من بود

در بند تو افتادم و از جمله برستم

### *I've broken my vows*

Let the people say I am drunk and in love  
It's true I have broken all my vows  
Let enemies hurt and friends scold me  
I am totally untouched by whatever they told me.  
My ego demanded honour and hypocrisy  
I liberated myself from it and now I am free  
Having seen your face I'd be damned  
If I set my eyes on any other friend.  
I used to mix and socialise with many  
With you, I would not want to see any  
I am drunk by looking at your figure, O Saqi  
Long before you serve your wine to me.  
All night I remain awake thinking of you  
So neither I nor the neighbours rest because of you  
Please do not talk to anyone else with those lips.  
Swear at me, instead, and I'll respond with praise  
Long ago your love made Sa'di tell his heart  
That no wonder he must worship this icon.  
My heart was bound by the fetters of universal sadness  
I fell into the fetters of your love and was liberated from it.<sup>32</sup>

نام سعدی به عشق بازی رفت  
نه خود اnder زمین نظیر تو نیست  
که قمر چون رخ منیر تو نیست  
ندهم دل به قد و قامت سرو  
که چو بالای دلپذیر تو نیست  
در همه شهر ای کمان ابرو  
کس ندانم که صید تیر تو نیست  
دل مردم دگر کسی نبرد  
که دلی نیست کان اسیر تو نیست  
گر بگیری نظیر من چه کنم  
که مرا در جهان نظیر تو نیست  
ظاهر آنست کان دل چو حدید  
در خور صدر چون حریر تو نیست  
همه عالم به عشق بازی رفت  
نام سعدی، که در ضمیر تو نیست

*Sa‘di’s name stood for loving*

It’s not just that no-one resembles you  
The moon itself lacks your shining face  
I will not adore the figure of the cypress tree  
Since as well-proportioned as yours it cannot be.  
Your eyebrow is such a perfect bow  
That no-one in town can escape its arrow  
No heart will be captured by anyone but you  
As there is no heart that is not captive to you.  
I cannot do a thing if you choose one like me  
Since I know not in the world one like thee  
On reflection you’ll know that your heart of steel  
Does not at all suit your breasts of silk.  
Everywhere Sa‘di’s name stood for love  
Except that his name is not in the beloved’s mind.<sup>33</sup>

## طوف کعبه

ای که رحمت می نیاید بر منت  
آفرین بر جان و رحمت بر تنت  
قامت گویم که دلبند است و خوب  
یا سخن یا آمدن یا رفتن  
شرمش از روی تو باید آفتاب  
کاندر آید بامداد از روزنت  
حسن اندامت نمی گویم به شرح  
خود حکایت می کند پیراهنت  
ای که سر تا پایت از گل خرمن است  
رحمتی کن بر گدای خرمانت  
ماهرویا مهربانی پیشه کن  
سیرتی چون صورت مستحسنست  
ای جمال کعبه رویی باز کن  
تا طوافی می کنم پیرامنت  
دست گیر این چند روزم در حیات  
تا نگیرم در قیامت دامنت  
عزم دارم کز دلت بیرون کنم  
و اندرون جان بسازم مسکنت  
درد دل با سنگدل گفتن چه سود  
باد سردی می دمم در آهنت  
گفتم از جورت بریزم خون خویش  
گفت خون خویشن در گردنت  
گفتم آتش در زنم آفاق را  
گفت سعدی درنگیرد با منت

### *Site of Ka'ba*

You have no pity for me at all  
But blessed be your body and soul.  
How should I praise your figure  
Your movements or speech of sugar.  
Of your face ashamed must be the sun  
When through the window it comes on.  
I shall not elaborate on your body  
Your garment itself tells its story.  
You who are a harvest of flowers  
Give some to your flower's beggar.  
O ravishing beauty try to be as kind  
As your moral beauty would demand.  
O site of Ka'ba show me a sign  
So I can turn around you like a divine.  
Take my hand in the few days of this world  
So I will not hold you to God in the next world.  
Out of my heart I intend to throw you whole  
And give you an abode within my soul.  
No use complaining to a heart of stone  
Which is just like blowing cold air at iron.  
I told her I would spill my blood  
She said it would be on your own head.  
I shall set fire to the horizons, I said  
Sa‘di I will not catch fire, she said.<sup>34</sup>

## عشق در بهار

درخت غنچه برآورده و بلبلان مستند  
جهان جوان شد و یاران به عیش بنشستند  
حریف مجلس ما خود همیشه دل می برد  
علی الخصوص که پیرایه ای بر او بستند  
کسان که در رمضان چنگ می شکستندی  
نسیم گل بشنیدند و توبه بشکستند  
بساط سبزه لگدکوب شد به پای نشاط  
زبس که عارف و عامی به رقص برجستند  
دو دوست قدر شناسند عهد صحبت را  
که مدتی ببریدند و باز پیوستند  
به در نمی رود از خانقه یکی هشیار  
که پیش شحنه بگوید که صوفیان مستند  
یکی درخت گل اندر فضای خلوت ماست  
که سروهای چمن پیش قامتش پستند  
اگر جهان همه دشمن شود، به دولت دوست  
خبر ندارم از ایشان که در جهان هستند  
مثال راکب دریاست حال کشته عشق  
که ترک بار بگفتند و خویشتن رستند  
به سرو گفت کسی میوه ای نمی آری  
جواب داد که آزادگان تهی دستند  
به راه عقل برفتند سعدیا بسیار  
که ره به عالم دیوانگان ندانستند

### ***Love in spring***

Trees are in bloom, nightingales drunk  
The world has turned young, friends in joyful truck.  
Full of charm always was our drinking partner  
Now adorned, she is more charming than ever.  
Those who during Ramadan broke the harp  
Heard the flower breathe and broke their fast.  
The lawn has been beaten down delightfully  
By the mystics and non-mystics dancing joyously.  
Two friends will appreciate friendship's fire  
Who parted for a while then returned in full desire.  
No sober person leaves the Sufis' abode [*khaneqah*]  
To tell the police that the Sufis are inebriate.  
In our quaint garden there is a floral tree  
More balanced in figure than the cypress tree.  
If the whole world becomes my enemy, I swear  
By my beloved that of none other I will care.  
He whom love has killed looks like seafarers  
Who dropped their cargo and survived themselves.  
The cypress tree was asked why it bore no fruit  
The free, it replied, are empty in hand and foot.  
Many, O Sa‘di, took the road to Rationality  
Because they knew not the path of Insanity.<sup>35</sup>

## من حیرانم

آن نه روی است که من وصف جمالش دام  
این حدیث از دگری پرس که من حیرانم  
همه بینند، نه این صنع که من می بینم  
همه خوانند، نه این نقش که من می خوانم  
آن عجب نیست که سر گشته بود طالب دوست  
عجب این است که من واصل و سرگردانم  
سر و در باغ نشانند و ترا بر سر و چشم  
گر اجازت دهی ای سرو روان بنشانم  
عشق من بر گل رخسار تو امروزی نیست  
دیر سالیست که من بلبل این بستانم  
به سرت کز سر پیمان محبت نروم  
گر بفرمائی رفتن به سر پیکانم  
باش تا جان ببرود در طلب جانانم  
که به کاری به از این باز نیاید جانم  
هر نصیحت که کنی بشنوم ای یار عزیز  
صبرم از دوست مفرمای که من نتوانم  
عجب از طبع هوسناک منت می آید  
من خود از مردم بی طبع عجب می مانم  
گفته بودی: که بود در همه عالم سعدی؟  
من به خود هیچ نیم هر چه تو گویی آنم  
گر به تشریف قبوم بنوازی ملکم  
ور به تازانه قهرم بزنی شیطانم

### ***I am wonderstruck***

That is not a face whose beauty I can express  
Let someone else do it as I am astounded.  
They all see, but that is not the art which *I* see  
They all read, but that is not the passage which *I* read.  
It is no wonder that her seekers are wondering  
It is a wonder that I am with her and still wondering.  
They plant the cypress tree in the orchard  
Moving cypress, let me put you on my eye and on my head!  
Loving the flower of your face is not new  
It's years that I have sung in this garden like a nightingale.  
By your head I will never break my pledge to you  
Even if you order me to sacrifice my life for you.  
Let me lose my life for the sake of the one I love  
Since nothing better than that would bring me back to life.  
Dearest love I will listen to any of your advice  
Except if you tell me to be patient with your loss.  
You wonder about my eagerly passionate nature  
Whereas I wonder at those who lack such nature.  
You had said 'Who in the world is Sa'di?'  
I am nothing and no-one, except what you call me.  
If you do me the honour of having me I am an angel  
And if you violently reject me I am Satan.<sup>36</sup>

## ماه و نهال

ای باغ حسن چون تو نهالی نیافته  
رخساره زمین چو تو خالی نیافته  
تابنده تر ز روی تو ماهی ندیده چرخ  
خوشتر ز ابروی تو هلالی نیافته  
بر دور عارض تو نظر کرده آفتاب  
خود را لطافتی و جمالی نیافته  
چرخ مشعبد از رخ تو دلفریب تر  
در زیر هفت پرده خیالی نیافته  
خود را به زیر چنگل شاهین عشق تو  
عنقای صبر من پرو وبالی نیافته  
تا کی ز درد عشق تو نالد روان من  
روزی به لطف از تو مثالی نیافته  
افتاده در زبان خلائق حدیث من  
با تو به یک حدیث مجالی نیافته  
زايل شود هر آنچه بکلی کمال یافت  
عمرم زوال یافت کمالی نیافته  
گلبرگ عیش من به چه امید بشکفده؟  
ازبستان وصل شمالی نیافته  
سعدی هزار جامه به روزی قبا کند  
یک مهربانی از تو به سالی نیافته

### *Moon-face sapling*

The garden of beauty has not moulded a shoot like you  
The face of the earth is void of a mole like you.  
A brighter moon the wheel of sky has not seen  
A crescent thinner than your eyebrow has not been.  
The sun has looked around your face  
And has failed to make for her beauty a case.  
In its seven layers the wily wheel is yet to find  
One more bewitching than your charming smile.  
The hawk of my patience is yet to fly  
Its wings in the claws of the condor of your love.  
How long should my soul moan of the pain of your love  
Without even once seeing an example of your kindness.  
I have become the talk of the town among the crowd  
And yet have not received from you one word.  
Whoever rises to his peak tends to decline  
I am declining and not having reached the top line.  
In what hope should the bud of my life open  
Having not had a breeze from the orchard of union.  
Sa‘di tears down a thousand garments in grief every day  
Without receiving one word of kindness from you in a year.<sup>37</sup>

## کاروان عالم اسرار

هر گه که بر من آن بت عیار بگزرد  
صد کاروان عالم اسرار بگزرد  
مست شراب و خواب و جوانی و شاهدی  
هر لحظه پیش مردم هشیار بگزرد  
هر گه که بگزرد بکشد دوستان خویش  
وین دوست منتظر که دگر بار بگزرد  
گفتم به گوشه ای بنشینم چو عاقلان  
دیوانه ام کند چو پریوار بگزرد  
گفتم دری ز خلق بیندم به روی خویش  
دردیست در دلم که ز دیوار بگزرد  
بازار حسن جمله خوبان شکسته ای  
ره نیست کز تو هیچ خریدار بگزرد  
غایب مشو که عمر گرانایه ضایع است  
الا دمی که در نظر یار بگزرد  
آسایش است رنج کشیدن به بوی آنک  
روزی طبیب بر سر بیمار بگزرد  
ترسم که مست و عاشق و بیدل شود چو ما  
گر محتسب به خانه خمار بگزرد  
سعدی به خوشتمندان رفت سوی دوست  
کانجا طریق نیست که اغیار بگزرد

### *Trails of mystery*

Each time that wayward idol passes by me  
A hundred trails of mystery mystify me.  
Drunk with wine, sleep, youthfulness and beauty  
That is how each time she passes by the sober society.  
Each time she passes she kills her friends  
Yet the friends long for her passing again.  
I thought I'd sit like a man of reason in a corner  
But that angel turns me mad when she turns the corner.  
I thought I'd turn into a recluse and shut out the world  
But the pain of love even pierces through the wall.  
You have broken the market of all that is beautiful  
There is no room left for buyers to pass at all.  
Do not withdraw as the sweet life is worthless  
Except with the beloved, the moment of bliss.  
There is comfort in suffering when there is hope  
That the doctor would one day manage.  
Perhaps if the morality policeman passes by the tavern  
He would also turn drunk, loving and unconscious.  
Sa‘di one cannot go to the beloved by oneself  
There is no road there for strangers to pass without help.<sup>38</sup>

# DESCRIPTIONS *of the* BELOVED

...برهنه اندامت

سر و قدی میان انجمنی

به که هفتاد سرو در چمنی

جهل باشد فراق صحبت دوست

بتماشای لاله و سمنی

ای که هرگز ندیده ای به جمال

جز در آینه مثل خویشتنی

تو که همتای خویشتن بینی

لا جرم ننگری به مثل منی

در دهانت سخن نمی گویم

که نگجد در آن دهن سخنی

بدنت در میان پیرهنت

همچو روحیست رفته در بدنی

وانکه بیند برهنه اندامت

گوید این پر گل است پیرهنسی

با وجودت خطابود که نظر

به ختایی کنند یا ختنی

باد اگر در من او قتد ببرد

که نماندست زیر جامه تنی

چاره بیچارگی بود سعدی

چون ندانند چاره ای و فنی

*...Your naked body*

One with an image of the cypress tree  
Is better than many real cypress trees  
How can one leave the beloved's side  
And go and see jasmine and tulip aside?  
Except in the mirror, you will never have seen  
As beautiful as yourself a scene  
Seeing just your own reflection  
How could you give the likes of me attention?  
The size of your mouth I will not mention  
It cannot hold even a word by intention  
Wrapped in its garment, your body  
Is just like a soul inside a body.  
And he who would see you naked  
Would say it is just a flower bed  
With you in sight it will be a mistake  
To behold other beauties instead.  
If the wind comes it will blow me away  
For I am just a raiment with no body  
The remedy, O Sa‘di, is despair  
When there is no remedy or repair.<sup>39</sup>

## شکر و عسل

جان و تم ای دوست فدای تن و جانت  
مویی نفروشم به همه ملک جهانت  
شیرین ترا از این لب نشنیدم که سخن گفت  
تو خود شکری یا عسل است آب دهانت؟  
یک روز عنایت کن و تیری به من انداز  
باشد که تفرج بکنم دست و کمانت  
گر راه بگردانی و گر روی بپوشی  
من می نگرم گوشه چشم نگرانت  
بر سرو نباشد رخ چون ماه منیرت  
بر ماه نباشد قد چون سرو روانت  
آخر چه بلای تو که در وصف نیایی  
بسیار بگفتیم و نکردیم بیانت  
هر کس که ملامت کند از عشق تو ما را  
معذور بدارند چو بینند عیانت  
حیف است چنین روی نگارین که بپوشی  
سودی به مساکن رسد آخر چه زیانت  
باز آی که در دیده هماندست خیالت  
بنشین که به خاطر بنشستست نشانت  
بسیار نباشد دلی از دست بدادن  
از جان رمقی دارم و هم برخی جانت  
دشنا� کرم کردی و گفتی و شنیدم  
خرم تن سعدی که برآمد به زیانت

### ***Sugar and honey***

Let my body and soul be a sacrifice to you beloved  
I will not exchange a hair of yours for the whole world  
Sweeter than these lips I have not heard anyone speak  
Speak, are you sugar itself or your mouth honey?  
One day be kind and at me throw a dart  
Luckily your hand and dart will be right  
Whether you turn back or cover your face  
I will see the corner of your eye in the chase.  
The cypress tree lacks your moonlit face  
What calamity, after all, are you?  
Hard as I tried I was unable to describe you  
The moon has not your cypress-tree grace.  
Whoever blames me for loving you  
Will take back the blame when seeing you  
It is wasteful that you cover this picture of a face  
Open, it profits the needy and costs you not a pittance.  
Come back, for in my eyes has remained your sight  
Sit down, since your face has settled in my mind  
It's not all that much losing my heart  
I've just one breath left which to you I'll sacrifice.  
Gracefully you swore at me; it made my fame  
Happy is Sa'di now that you mention his name.<sup>40</sup>

## معجز و کرامت

این که تو داری قیامت است نه قامت  
وین نه تبسم که معجز است و کرامت  
هر که تماشای روی چون قمرت کرد  
سینه سپر کرد پیش تیر ملامت  
هر شب و روزی که بی تو می رود از عمر  
بر نفسی می رود هزار ندامت  
عمر نبود آنچه غافل از تو نشستم  
باقي عمر ایستاده ام به غرامت  
سرخرامان چو قد معتدلت نیست  
آن همه وصفش که می کنند به قامت  
چشم مسافر که بر جمال تو افتاد  
عزم رحیلش بدل شود به اقامت  
اهل فریقین در تو خیره چاند  
گر بروی در حسابگاه قیامت  
این همه سختی و نامرادی سعدی  
چون تو پسندی سعادت است و سلامت

### *Miracle and grace*

Your figure is beyond praise  
Your smile nothing but miracle and grace  
Whoever saw your moon-shaped face  
Loved it and was ready to be blamed.  
Each day and night that I am without you  
My every word is filled with remorse  
The time I spent without you I don't call life  
All my life I have tried to make up for this loss.  
The cypress tree, praised so much for its stature,  
Pales before your well-proportioned figure  
If a traveller sets his eye on you  
He will change his mind and not go.  
If you rise on the Day of Resurrection  
All parties will be dazzled by your reflection.  
If you like all that Sa'di suffers  
Then the suffering counts as health and happiness.<sup>41</sup>

چه شیرین دهن است آن

در وصف نیاید که چه شیرین دهن است آن

این است که دور از لب و دندان من است آن

عارض نتوان گفت که دور قمر است آن

بالا نتوان خواند که سرو چمن است آن

در سرو رسیدست ولیکن به حقیقت

از سرو گذشتست که سیمین بدن است آن

هرگز نبود جسم بدین حسن و لطافت

کویی همه روح است که در پیرهن است آن

خال است بر آن صفحه سیمین بنگوش

یا نقطه ای از غالیه بر یاسمن است آن؟

فی الجمله قیامت تویی امروز در آفاق

در چشم تو پیداست که باب قتن است آن

گفتم که دل از چنبر زلفت برهانم

ترسم نرهانم که شکن بر شکن است آن

هر کس که به جان آرزوی وصل تو دارد

دشوار بر آید که محقر گمن است آن

گر خسته دلی نعره زند بر سر کویی

عیش نتوان گفت که بی خویشن است آن

نژدیک من آن است که هر جور و خطای

کر صاحب وجه حسن آید حسن است آن

سعدی سر سودای تو دارد نه سر خویش

هر جامه که عیار بپوشد کفن است آن

### *The sweetness of her mouth*

The sweetness of her mouth is divine  
No wonder that it is far from mine  
Don't call it a face, it's a full moon  
Don't call it a figure, it's a cypress tree.  
But in fact she has surpassed the cypress tree  
For her body is made of silver  
Never will you find a body as delicate as this  
It's as if her soul alone fills her dress.  
Is it a mole on that silvery ear  
Or a piece of musk on a jasmine flower?  
In short you are the chaos in the world today  
And one can see the riot in your eye.  
I tried to liberate my heart from the curl of your hair  
But I may not succeed as it is full of curls  
Wishing to sacrifice one's life to have you  
Is difficult to fulfil for the price is small.  
If a sad lover shouts in your neighbourhood  
He cannot be blamed for he is not in control  
I believe that any offence or error  
Committed by a beauty is fine.  
Sa'di only thinks of you not of himself  
Any raiment worn by a libertine is a shroud.<sup>42</sup>

لعلی چو لب شکر فشانت  
من چون تو به دلبری ندیدم  
گلبرگ چنین طری ندیدم  
مانند تو آدمی در آفاق  
ممکن نبود، پری ندیدم  
وین بوعجیس و چشم یندی  
در صنعت سامری ندیدم  
با روی تو ماه آسمان را  
امکان پرابری ندیدم  
لعلی چو لب شکر فشانت  
در کلبه جوهري ندیدم  
چون در دو رسته دهافت  
نظم سخن دری ندیدم  
مه را که خرد که من به کرات  
مه دیدم و مشتری ندیدم  
وین پرده راز پارسايان  
چندان که تو من دری ندیدم  
دیدم همه دلبران آفاق  
چون تو به دلاوري ندیدم  
جوزی که تو من کنی در اسلام  
در ملت کافری ندیدم  
سعدي غم عشق خوبرويان  
چندان که تو من خوری ندیدم  
دیدم همه صوفيان آفاق  
مثل تو قلندری ندیدم

### *The ruby of your lips*

None as enticing as you have I come across  
No flower as fresh as you have I crossed  
It's impossible to find humans, not even fairies,  
Like you anywhere, even on all the horizons.  
Nor have I seen the like of your magical art  
In the magic performed by the golden calf  
Nor can the moon shining in blue sky  
Compete with your radiant appearance.  
Nor have I seen a ruby like your sweet lips  
Among the rubies in a jeweller's ruby bag  
And like the two rows of pearls in your mouth  
I have not even found the pearls of the Persian tongue.  
Who would buy the moon since many a time  
I saw the moon without a customer in line?  
Nor have I seen anyone like you  
Revealing the secrets of your pious lovers.  
I saw all the sweethearts everywhere  
But did not find one as audacious as you  
And the cruelty you commit in Islamic lands  
I have not seen committed in the lands of the infidels.  
Sa‘di, I have seen no-one who as much as you  
Suffers from the love of pretty-faced people  
I did see all the Sufis of the world  
But not one as libertine as you.<sup>43</sup>

لب شیرین شکربار  
کس ندانم که در این شهر گرفتار تو نیست  
هیچ بازار چنین گرم که بازار تو نیست  
سر و زیبا و به زیبایی بالای تو نه  
شهد شیرین و به شیرینی گفتار تو نیست  
خود که باشد که ترا بیند و عاشق نشود  
مگر کش هیچ نباشد که خریدار تو نیست  
کس ندیدست ترا یک نفس اندر همه عمر  
که همه عمر دعاگوی و هوادار تو نیست  
آدمی نیست مگر كالبدی بی جان است  
آنکه گوید که مرا میل به دیدار تو نیست  
ای که شمشیر جفا بر سر ما آخته ای  
صلح کردیم که ما را سر پیکار تو نیست  
جور تلخ است ولیکن چه کنم گر نبزم  
چون گریز از لب شیرین شکر بار تو نیست  
من سری دارم و در پای تو خواهم بازید  
خجل از ننگ بضاعت که سزاوار تو نیست  
به جمال تو که دیدار ز من باز نگیر  
که مرا طاقت نادیدن دیدار تو نیست  
سعدهایا گر نتوانی که کم خود گیری  
سر خود گیر که صاحب نظری کار تو نیست

### *Sweet sugary lips*

I know no-one who is not bewitched by you  
No bazaar is as busy as the bazaar of loving you.  
The cypress tree is beautiful but not like your figure  
Honey is sweet but not as sweet as your speech.  
No-one who sees you would not fall in love with you  
He who seeks you not must have nothing to offer you.  
There is no-one who has seen you for one breath  
Who will not want you and pray for you until death.  
It is not a human, only a lifeless corpse perhaps  
Who would say he does not long to set eyes on you.  
You have drawn the dagger of unkindness against me  
Peace! Because I have no intention of fighting thee.  
Suffering is hard but I am prepared to put up with it  
Since there is no choice of ignoring your sweet sugary lips.  
I have a head and am ready to lose it at your feet  
I am only embarrassed that they are not worthy of it.  
By your beauty do not stop me from seeing you  
Since I cannot possibly bear not seeing you.  
If you cannot keep yourself and your own, Sa'di  
Then give up since you lack the art of loving.<sup>44</sup>

با توصورت دیوار در نمی گنجد  
حدیث عشق به طومار در نمی گنجد  
بیان دوست به گفتار در نمی گنجد  
سماع انس که دیوانگان از آن مستند  
به سمع مردم هشیار در نمی گنجد  
میسرت نشود عاشقی و مستوری  
ورع به خانه خمار در نمی گنجد  
چنان فراغ نشستست یار در دل تنگ  
که بیش زحمت اغیار در نمی گنجد  
ترا چنان که تویی من صفت ندانم کرد  
که عرض جامه به بازار در نمی گیجد  
دگر به صورت هیچ آفریده دل ندهم  
که با تو صورت دیوار در نمی گنجد  
خبر که می دهد امشب رقیب مسکین را  
که سگ به زاویه غار در نمی گنجد  
چو گل به بار بود همنشین خار بود  
چو در کنار بود خار در نمی گنجد  
چنان ارادت و شوق است در میان دو دوست  
که سعی دشمن خونخوار در نمی گنجد  
به چشم دل نظرت می کنم که دیده سر  
ز بر ق شعله دیدار در نمی گنجد  
ز دوستان که ترا هست جای سعدی نیست  
کدا میان خریدار در نمی گنجد

*No portrayal does your face justice*

Love is not a story that can be written  
The beloved's description cannot be spoken.  
The song of friendship which inebriates the mad  
Cannot reach the ears of those who are sober.  
You won't be able to love and treat it secretly  
Just as the tavern is not a place for piety.  
She has filled the labyrinths of my heart so well  
That no room is left for strangers to intrude.  
I cannot tell what in fact you are  
How can one take cloths to a merchant clothier?  
I will never worship any other person's face  
For not even a picture compares with your face.  
Who will tell my miserable rival tonight  
That he has no hope in a thousand nights?  
The flower on the branch sits with thorns  
But when it is in your hand it feels warm.  
The bond of our friendship is so strong  
That the enemy's campaign will not do wrong.  
I watch you with my heart's eye since  
My head's eye cannot bear the light in your eyes.  
You have so many friends that there is no room for Sa'di  
What can a poor man do among so many buyers?<sup>45</sup>

UNION

### جهان گلزار می بینم

منم یا رب در این دولت که روی یار می بینم  
فراز سرو سیمینش گلی پر بار می بینم؟  
مگر طوبی بر آمد در سرابستان جان من  
که بر هر شعبه ای مرغی شکرگفتار می بینم؟  
مگر دنیا سرآمد کاین چنین آزاد در جنت  
می بی درد می نوشم گل بی خار می بینم؟  
عجب دارم ز بخت خویش و هر دم در گمان افتم  
که مستم، یا بخوابم، یا جمال یار می بینم  
زمین بوسیده ام بسیار و خدمت کرده تا اکنون  
لب معشوق می بوسم رخ دلدار می بینم.  
چه طاعت کرده ام گویی که این پاداش می یابم؟  
چه فرمان برده ام گویی که این مقدار می بینم؟  
تویی یارا که خوابآلوده بر من تاختن کردي  
منم یا رب که بخت خود چنین بیدار می بینم؟  
چو خلوت در میان آمد نخواهم شمع کاشانه  
تمنای بهشتم نیست چون دیدار می بینم  
کدامین لاله می بویم که مغزم عنبرآگین شد  
چه ریحان دسته بندم چون جهان گلزار می بینم؟  
ز گدون نعره می آید که اینت بوالعجب کاری  
که سعدی را ز روی دوست برخوردار می بینم

*I see flowers everywhere*

God, am I so fortunate that I see the beloved's face  
Above her silvery figure a flower full of grace?  
Did the heavenly tree grow in the garden of my soul  
That in every branch I see a bird with a sweet call?  
Has the world expired that so freely in paradise  
I drink pure wine and see flowers thornless?  
I am astonished at my luck and keep wondering  
Am I drunk or asleep, or is it the beloved I am seeing?  
I have knelt and worshipped her many a time  
Now I see her face and kiss her lips all the time.  
What good have I done to deserve such a reward?  
What service have I performed to be lifted so upward?  
Is it you beloved galloping towards me sleepily?  
Is it me, O God, being in so much luck so deeply?  
Now that we are alone I do not want a candle  
Being with her, paradise I do not wish to handle.  
What rose did I smell that has perfumed my head?  
What flowers should I gather when the world is a flower bed?  
I hear a voice saying what a wonderful felicity  
That Sa'di is enjoying the beloved's company.<sup>46</sup>

## شور عشق

نه آن شب است که کس در میان ما گنجد  
به خاک پایت اگر ذره در هوا گنجد  
کلاه ناز و تکبر بنه، کمر بگشای  
که چون تو سرو ندیدم که در قبا گنجد  
ز من حکایت هجران مپرس در شب وصل  
عتاب کیست که در خلوت رضا گنجد؟  
مرا شکر منه و گل مریز در مجلس  
میان خسرو و شیرین شکر کجا افتاد؟  
چو شور عشق درآمد قرار عقل نماند  
درون مملکتی چون دو پادشا گنجد؟  
نماند در سر سعدی ز بانگ رود و سرود  
مجال آن که دگر پند پارسا گنجد

### *Passion for love*

No-one can come between us tonight  
By the dust I swear not even a particle might.  
Stop the coquetry and pride; take off your headdress  
Open your cummerbund and let out that cypress.  
Stop asking me about the sadness of separation  
Now we are together, complaints bring no salvation.  
Do not bring me flowers and offer me sugar  
Khosrow and Shirin are not in need of sugar.<sup>47</sup>  
The passion for love came, reason departed  
How can two kings coexist in one kingdom?  
Sa‘di listened to so much music and song  
That left him no time for listening to pious advice.<sup>48</sup>

## در آغوش یار

یک امشبی که در آغوش شاهد شکر  
گرم چو عود بر آتش نهند غم نخورم  
چو التماس برآمد هلاک باکی نیست  
کجاست تیر بلا گو بیا که من سپرم  
بیند یک نفس ای آسمان دریچه صبح  
بر آفتاب، که امشب خوش است با قمرم  
ندام این شب قدر است یا ستاره روز  
توبی برابر من یا خیال در نظرم؟  
خوشای های گلستان و عشق در بستان  
اگرنبودی تشویش بلبل سحرم  
بدین دو دیده که امشب ترا همی بینم  
دریغ باشد فردا به دیگری نگرم  
روان تشنه برآساید از وجود فرات  
مرا فرات ز سر برگذشت و تشنه ترم  
چو می ندیدمت از شوق بی خبر بودم  
کنون که با تو نشستم ز ذوق بی خبرم  
سخن یگوی که بیگانه پیش ما کس نیست  
بغیر شمع و همین ساعتش زیان برم  
میان ما بجز این پیرهن نخواهد بود  
وگر حجاب شود تا به دامنش بدرم  
مگوی، سعدی از این عشق جان نخواهد برد  
بگو کجا برم آن جان که از غمت برم

*In the beloved's embrace*

This one night in my beloved's embrace  
If they set me on fire it would leave no trace  
Once my desire is fulfilled, death brings no fear  
I am ready like a shield for the arrow of fate.  
O heavens shut the morning's window to the sun  
Tonight I am happy with the moon as it shines  
Is this the morning star or the Sacred Night?  
Is it you in front of me or just your thought?  
I wish we could go and sleep out on the lawn  
If I did not worry about the nightingale of the dawn  
These two eyes with which tonight I see you  
It'll be a pity if I set them on another tomorrow.  
The soul of the thirsty is soothed by a river  
In the river I am drowning and am thirstier  
In your absence I did not know delight  
Now that I see you in joy I am enchanted.  
Speak! There is no stranger except the candle  
Whose tongue I will cut off this moment and handle  
Nothing would separate us except this garment  
And if it comes between us I will tear it apart.  
Do not say Sa‘di will not survive this love  
Tell me how I can shed the sadness of your love.<sup>49</sup>

## دیدار با یار

بسم از هواگرفتن که پری نماند و بالی  
به کجا روم ز دستت که نمی دهی مجالی  
نه ره گریز دارم نه طریق آشنایی  
چه غم اوفتاده ای را که تواند احتیالی  
چه خوش است در فراقی همه عمر صیر کردن  
به امید آنکه روزی به کف او قتد وصالی  
به تو حاصلی ندارد غم روزگار گفت  
که شبی نخفته باشی به درازنای سالی  
غم حال دردمدان نه عجب گرت نباشد  
که چنین نرفته باشد همه عمر بر تو حالی  
سخنی بگوی با من که چنان اسیر عشقم  
که به خویشتن ندارم ز وجودت اشتغالی  
چه نشینی ای قیامت بنمای سرو قامت  
به خلاف سرو بستان که ندارد اعتدالی  
که نه امشب آن سماع است که دف خلاص یابد  
به طیانجه ای و بربیط برهد به گوشمالی  
دگر آفتاب رویت منمای آسمان را  
که قمر ز شرمصاری بشکست چون هلالی  
خط مشکبوی و خالت به مناسبت تو گویی  
قلم غبار می رفت و فرو چکید خالی  
تو هم این نگوی سعدی که نظر گناه باشد  
که است بر گرفتن نظر از چنین جمالی

### *Being with the beloved*

Enough of taking off, I have no wings left  
Where can I take your thought when you are here?  
I can neither run away nor be with you  
Down and out, I wish I could find a way.  
I spent all my life far away from you  
It would be good if on the Day of Judgement I see you  
It's good to suffer separation all one's life  
If there is hope of reunion at least once.  
There is no point in speaking to you of pain  
Since your night has never been as long as a year  
Speak to me for I am so deeply in love  
That I have lost myself at your side.  
Why sit, rise up and show your fine figure  
(Proportioned as it is unlike the cypress tree)  
Since this is not a joyful song and dance  
That the lyre and the drum will play only once.  
Stop showing the sun-shaped face in the firmament  
It shames the moon and breaks it into a crescent  
Your sweet-smelling *khatt* and mole look as if  
The pen of dust was moving and it dropped a drip.  
Do not say, Sa‘di, that looking [*nazar*] is a sin  
To stop looking at such a beauty is a sin.<sup>50</sup>

مبارا که گنجی ببیند فقیر  
مرا راحت از زندگی دوش بود  
که آن ماهرویم در آغوش بود  
چنان مست دیدار و حیران عشق  
که دنیا و دینم فراموش بود  
نگویم می لعل شیرین گوار  
که زهر از کف دست او نوش بود  
ندانستم از غایت لطف و حسن  
که سیم و سمن یا بر و دوش بود  
بدیدار و گفتار جان پرورش  
سرپایی من دیده و گوش بود  
نمی دانم آن شب که چون روز شد  
کسی بازداش که باهوش بود  
موذن غلط کرد بانگ نماز  
مگر همچو من مست و مدهوش بود  
بگفتیم و دشمن بدانست و دوست  
نمی داشت آن تحمل که سرپوش بود  
بخوابش مگر دیده ای سعدیا  
زیان درکش امروز کان دوش بود  
مبارا که گنجی ببیند فقیر  
که نتواند از حرص خاموش بود

*Discovery of a treasure*

Last night I felt the joy of life  
When that beauty was in my arms  
So drunk was I by love and her presence  
That I had forgotten both life and providence.  
I will not call it sweet agreeable ruby wine  
Since even poison from her hands was divine  
I had not known that beauty could seem  
As if it were made of silver and jasmine.  
Seeing and talking to her lifted up my soul  
I was eyes and ears from head to toe  
I know not how this night ended with the day  
I might have known if I had not lost consciousness.  
The muezzin called for morning prayer too early  
Perhaps like me he was drunk and melancholy  
We did not have the patience to hide our union  
So both friend and enemy learned of what had happened.  
Sa'di, you might have seen her in a dream  
Say no more today since that was last night  
Let no man discover a treasure house  
Since he'd be too joyful to hold his tongue.<sup>51</sup>

در آتش چو خلیل  
آمدی وه که چه مشتاق و پریشان بودم  
تا برفتی ز برم صورت بی جان بودم  
نه فراموشی ام از ذکر تو خاموش نشاند  
که در اندیشه اوصاف تو حیران بودم  
بی تو در دامن گلزار نخفتم یک شب  
که نه در بادیه خار مغیلان بودم  
زنده می کرد مرا دمبدم امید وصال  
ور نه دور از نظرت کشته هجران بودم  
به تولای تو در آتش محنت چو خلیل  
گوییا در چمن لاله و ریحان بودم  
تا مگر یک نفسم بوی تو آرد دم صبح  
همه شب منتظر مرغ سحرخوان بودم  
سعدی از جور فراقت شب و روز این می گفت  
عهد بشکستی و من بر سر پیمان بودم

*Engulfed in fire like Abraham*

You went and I was a soulless face  
You came when I was dishevelled and desirous.  
I stopped mentioning you not out of forgetfulness  
I was just puzzled about how to sing your praise.  
Without you, sleeping in a bed of flowers  
Felt as if I were in a desert full of thistles.  
What kept me alive was the hope of union  
Otherwise I would have been killed by separation.  
By your friendship being engulfed in fire like Abraham  
It felt as if I were in a lawn full of tulips and sweet basil.  
In the hope that I receive your scent once at dawn  
All night I was waiting for the dawn-bird to moan.  
Suffering from separation Sa‘di kept saying  
You broke your pledge but I honoured mine.<sup>52</sup>

لکم دینکم و لی دین

شب است و شاهد و شمع و شراب و شیرینی

غنیمت است چنین شب که دوستان بینی

به شرط آنکه منت بنده وار در خدمت

بایستم، تو خداوند وار بنشینی

میان ما و شما عهد در ازل رفتست

هزار سال بر آید همان نخستینی

چو صبرم از تو میسر نمی شود چه کنم

به خشم رفتم و باز آمدم به مسکینی

به حکم آنکه مرا هیچ دوست چون تو به دست

نیاید، تو به از من هزار بگزینی

به رنگ و بوی بهار ای فقیر قانع باش

چو با غبان نگذارد که سیب و گل چینی

تفاوتی نکند گر ترش کنی ابرو

هزار تلخ بگویی هنوز شیرینی

لگام بر سر شیران کند صلابت عشق

چنان کشد که شتر را مهار در بینی

ز نیکبختی، سعدیست پای بند غمت

زهی کبوتر مقبل که صید شاهینی

مرا شکیب نمی باشد ای مسلمانان

ز روی خوب، لکم دینکم و لی دینی

*Your faith is yours and mine is mine*

There is beauty, candlelight, wine and sweets this night  
Cherish such a night when you see those you love  
On the condition that I stand as your servant  
And you sit down like my lord and master.  
You and I made our pledge at the dawn of creation  
Even if a thousand years pass you'll still be my choice.  
I cannot bear being separated from you  
So I went in anger and returned humble  
Because I will never have a beloved like you  
While you can choose a thousand better than me.  
Poor man be content with the spring's colours and scents  
When the gardener does not let you pick apples and flowers  
It will make no difference, my love, if you frown  
Bitter words you may utter but you are still sweet.  
Lions would be pulled by the strength of love  
And as hard it would be as the rein pulls a camel  
Sa‘di is fortunate to suffer sadness for you  
Like a fortunate pigeon in the claws of an eagle.  
I have no patience with good looks O Muslims  
Your faith is yours and mine is mine.<sup>53</sup>

## شب وصل

یا رب شب دوشین چه مبارک سحری بود  
کو را به سر کشته هجران گذری بود  
آن دوست که ما را به ارادت نظری داشت  
با ما مگر او را به عنایت نظری بود  
من بعد شکایت نکنم تلخی هجران  
کان میوه که از صبر برآمد شکری بود  
رویی نتوان گفت که حسنیش به چه ماند  
کویی که در آن نیم شب از روز دری بود  
گویی قمری بود کس از من نپسندید:  
باغی که به هر شاخ درختش قمری بود  
آن دم که خبر بودم از او تا تو نگویی  
کز خویشتن و هر که جهانم خبری بود  
در عالم وصفش به جهانی برسیدم  
کاندر نظرم هر دو جهان مختصراً بود  
من بودم و او، نی، قلم اندر سر من کش  
با او نتوان گفت وجود دگری بود  
با غمزه خوبان که چو شمشیر کشیدست  
در صبر بدیدم که نه محکم سپری بود  
سعدی نتوانی که دگر دیده بدوزی  
کان دل بربودند که صیرش قدری بود

### *Night of union*

God what a blessed dawn was last night's union  
As she was visiting me dead from separation.  
It showed that the beloved I much adore  
Also cares for the one whom she adores.  
Henceforth I will not moan about separation  
Since the fruit of patience was sensation.  
It is impossible to say what she looked like  
It was as if she and the sun were shining alike.  
It would be wrong to say that she was the moon  
More a garden with trees adorned by moons.  
Having her with me, you should not imagine  
That I was aware of anyone else or of me.  
While praising her I got as far as a world  
Beside which the world was just a little abode.  
There was she and me – no, strike the word 'me'  
For with her there can be none other than she.  
With the beloved's coquetry – a drawn sword –  
The shield of patience will never work.  
No point in longing, Sa'di, any more  
Being robbed of the heart that could endure.<sup>54</sup>

## پستان یار

امشب مگر به وقت نمی خواند این خروس  
عشاق بس نکرده هنوز از کنار و بوس  
پستان یار در خم گیسوی تابدار  
چون گوی عاج در خم چوگان آبنوس  
یک شب که یار فتنه خفتست زینهار  
بیدار باش تا نرود عمر بر فسوس  
تا نشنوی ز مسجد آدینه بانگ صبح  
یا از در سرای اتابک غریبو کوس  
لب بر لبی چو چشم خروس، ابلهی بود  
برداشتن به گفته بیهوده خروس

*The beloved's breast*

Does the cock not crow in time, tonight?  
Lovers have not yet stopped kissing and delight.  
The beloved's breast engulfed in her curly hair  
Is like a ball of ivory hit by a black polo mallet.  
This night that the beloved is no longer seditious  
Try to be awake so your life is not passed useless.  
So that the muezzin does not remind you of the dawn  
Nor do you hear the morning drums from the king's lawn.  
Mouth stuck on mouth like the eye of the cock  
It would be folly to stop by the crow of the cock.<sup>55</sup>

## گدا و پادشاه

من اگر نظر حرام است بسی گناه دارم  
چه کنم نمی توانم که نظر نگاه دارم  
ستم از کسیست بر من که ضرورت است بردن  
نه قرار زخم خوردن نه مجال آه دارم  
نه فراتت نشستن نه شکیب رخت بستن  
نه مقام ایستادن نه گریزگاه دارم  
نه اگر همی نشینم نظری کند به رحمت  
نه اگر همی گریزم دگری پناه دارم  
بسی از قبول عامی و صلاح نیکنامی  
چو به ترک سر بگفتم چه غم از کلاه دارم  
تن من فدای جانت، سر بنده و آستانت  
چه مرا به از گدانی چو تو پادشاه دارم  
چو ترا بدین نکوتی قدم صلاح باشد  
نه مروت است اگر من نظر تباہ دارم  
چه شبیست یا رب امشب که ستاره ای برآمد  
که دگر نه عشق خورشید و نه مهر ماه دارم  
مکنید دردمندان گله از شب جدائی  
که من این صباح روشن ز شب سیاه دارم  
که نه روی خوب دیدن گنه است پیش سعدی  
تو گمان نیک بردم که من این گناه دارم

### *Beggar and lord*

If throwing an erotic look is sinful, I am immersed in sin  
I have no choice and cannot withhold my look and not sin  
She who makes me suffer I have no choice but to obey  
Neither can I bear being hurt, nor can I complain.  
I have not permission to sit, nor the patience to go  
Nor a place to stand, nor anywhere to turn to  
Nor if I sit would she throw me a kind look  
Nor if I run off is there another to look for.  
Enough of general approval and good address  
Having delivered the head why worry about the headdress  
May my body be a sacrifice to your soul,  
my head on your threshold  
What better than being a beggar when I have you as lord?  
As pretty as you are, you are good too  
It will not be fair if less than that I show  
God, what a night is it that with this star in my arms  
I no longer love the sun nor desire the moon and stars.  
Sufferers stop complaining about the night of separation  
Because I have this bright morning  
after a dark night's deliberation  
Sa‘di does not believe seeing a beautiful face is a sin  
Although you thought that he had certainly sinned.<sup>56</sup>

### اکسیر عشق

از در درآمدی و من از خود بدر شدم  
گفتی کز این جهان به جهان دگر شدم  
کوشم به راه تا که خبر می دهد ز دوست  
صاحب خبر بیامد و من بی خبر شدم  
چون شنیم او فتاده بدم پیش آفتاب  
مهرم به جان رسید و به عیوق بر شدم  
گفتم ببینمش مگرم درد اشتیاق  
ساکن شود، بدیدم و مشتاق تر شدم  
دستم نداد قوت رفتن به پیش یار  
چندی به پای رفتم و چندی به سر شدم  
تا رفتنش ببینم و گفتنش بشنوم  
از پای تا به سر همه سمع و بصر شدم  
من چشم از او چگونه توانم نگاه داشت  
کاول نظر به دیدن او دیده ور شدم  
بیزارم از وفای تو یک روز و یک زمان  
مجموع اگر نشستم و خرسند اگر شدم  
او را خود التفات نبودش به صید من  
من خویشتن اسیر کمند نظر شدم  
گویند روی سرخ تو سعدی چه زرد کرد  
اکسیر عشق بر مسم افتاد و زر شدم

### *Alchemy of love*

You stepped into my life and I lost control  
As if I had moved from this to the other world  
My ears ready to receive the news of the friend  
The news arrived and I lost news of myself.  
Like dew I lay on my face below the sun  
Love filled my soul and I rose up to the sky  
I thought when I see her the pain of desire will be relieved  
I saw her and my desire massively increased.  
I did not have the strength to try to reach my friend  
Now I walked on my feet and now I walked on my head  
To see her move and hear her speak  
I became eyes and ears from head to toe.  
How can I ever cease to sit and watch her?  
I learned seeing after all by opening my eyes to her  
I would be inconstant if only for a time  
I sat relaxed and happy without you sublime.  
It was not she who aimed to hunt me down  
I myself fell into her lasso when I saw her run  
They ask Sa‘di what turned your face yellow  
It was the alchemy of love which turned me into gold.<sup>57</sup>

## وصال با دوست

مبارک تر شب و خرم ترین روز  
به استقبام آمد بخت پیروز  
دهل زن گو دو نوبت زن بشارت  
که دوشم قدر بود امروز نوروز  
مه است این یا ملک یا آدمیزاد  
پری یا آفتاب عالم افروز  
ندانستی که ضدان در کمین اند  
نکو کردی علی رغم بد آموز  
مرا با دوست ای دشمن وصال است  
تو را گر دل نخواهد دیده بردوز  
شبان دانم که از درد جدائی  
نیاسودم ز فریاد جهانسوز  
گر آن شب های با وحشت نمی بود  
نمی دانست سعدی قدر امروز

*In union with my lover*

The most blissful night and auspicious day  
Were victory's meeting two paces away.  
Verily twice must I have song and dance  
Once for today's bliss one for last night's.  
Is my lover moon, human or angel  
Fairy is she or the light of sun?  
You did not know the knaves were looking  
Yet did the right thing despite their cooking.  
Tell the enemy I am in union with my love  
And he can go hang from gallows above.  
I remember the nights of separation  
And the pain of burning sensation.  
If Sa‘di had not suffered those nights of terror  
His day wouldn't have been a shining mirror.<sup>58</sup>

# SEPARATION

### شب تنهایی

سر آن ندارد امشب که برآید آفتابی  
چه خیال ها گذر کرد و گذر نکرد خوابی  
به چه دیر ماندی ای صبح که جان من برآمد  
بزه کردنی و نکردند موذنان ثوابی  
نفس خروس بگرفت که نوبتی بخواند  
همه بلبان پرددند و نماند جز غرابی  
نفحات صبح دانی ز چه روی دوست دارم  
که به روی یار ماند که برافکند نقابی  
سرم از خدای خواهد که به پایش اندر افتاد  
که در آب مرده بهتر که در آرزوی آبی  
دل من نه مرد آن است که با غمیش برآید  
مگسی کجا تواند که برافکند عقابی  
نه چنان گناهکارم که به دشمنم سپاری  
تو به دست خویش فرمای اگرم کنی عذابی  
دل همچو سنگت ای دوست به آب چشم سعدی  
عجب است اگر نگردد که بگردد آسیابی  
برو ای گدای مسکین و دری دگر طلب کن  
که هزار بار گفتی و نیامدت جوابی

### *A night of loneliness*

The sun does not deign to rise upon this night  
What thoughts traversed the mind and no sleep in sight.  
Why are you so late a morning that I am about to fall  
You sinned and the muezzins failed to make their call.  
The cock is choking just to try to crow one time  
All the nightingales died and only the ravens survived.  
Do you know why I love the morning breeze?  
It feels as if the beloved's veil has been eased.  
My head begs of God to fall down to her feet  
Since it is better to die in water than of thirst.  
My heart cannot bear the sadness of her love  
Just as a bird cannot resist the power of a hawk.  
I am not so guilty as to be handed to my enemy  
Do it by your own hands if you wish to torture me.  
Sa'di's tears alas do not turn your heart of stone  
Whereas a mill can turn by the water of my eye alone.  
Go off miserable beggar and find another door to solicit  
Here you begged a thousand times and got no reply for it.<sup>59</sup>

### تحمل نکنم بار جدایی

من ندانستم از اول که تو بی مهر و وفای  
عهد ناپست از آن به که بیندی و نپایی  
دوستان عیب کنندم که چرا دل به تو دادم  
باید اول به تو گفت که چنین خوب چرایی  
ای که گفتی مرو اندر پی خوبان زمانه  
ما کجاییم در این پسر تفکر تو کجایی  
آن نه خال است و زنخدا و سر زلف پریشان  
که دل اهل نظر برد که سریست خدایی  
برده بردار که بیگانه خود آن روی نبیند  
تو بزرگی و در آینه کوچک ننمایی  
حلقه بر در نتوانم زدن از بیم رقیبان  
این توائم که بیایم به محلت به گدایی  
عشق و درویشی و انگشت غایی و ملامت  
همه سهل است تحمل نکنم بار جدایی  
روز صحرا و سماع است و لب جوی و تماشا  
در همه شهر دلی نیست که دیگر بربایی  
گفته بودم که بیایی غم دل با تو بگویم  
چه بگویم که غم از دل برود چون تو بیایی  
شمع را باید از این خانه برون بردن و کشتن  
تا به همسایه نگوید که تو در خانه مایی  
سعده آن نیست که هرگز ز کمند بگریزد  
که بدانست که در بند تو بهتر که رهایی  
خلق گویند برو دل به هوای دگری ده  
نکنم خاصه در ایام اتابک دو هوایی

### ***Separation is unbearable sorrow***

Little did I know that constancy and kindness you lack  
It's better not to make a pledge than to break it.  
Friends blame me for giving my heart to you  
They should tell you first why so unforgettable are you.  
He who warns me not to love the beauties of our time  
His world and mine are worlds apart.  
That is not just a mole, a chin, dishevelled hair  
It's ravished everyone's heart as it is God's secret.  
Drop the veil for the stranger will not see your face  
You are too great to be reflected in a small mirror case.  
For fear of rivals I cannot knock at your door  
Only disguised as a beggar can I come to your abode.  
Love, poverty, being caught and scolded  
It'll all come easy, except being separated.  
Today everyone goes to the country to enjoy nature  
No heart is left in town for you to venture.  
I had promised to tell all my sorrows when you come  
What can I say since sorrows leave me as you come.  
The candle should be taken and extinguished outside  
So the neighbours do not learn that you are inside.  
Sa'di is not one who would break out of your chain  
He knows he is better your captive than free in pain.  
People tell me to give my heart to someone else  
But I will not seek yet another love elsewhere.<sup>60</sup>

### آبگینه شکسته

تو هیچ عهد نبستی که عاقبت نشکستی  
مرا بر آتش سوزان نشاندی و ننشستی  
بنای مهر نمودی که پایدار نماند  
مرا به بند بستی خود از کمند بجستی  
دم شکستی و رفتی خلاف شرط مودت  
به احتیاط گذر کن که آبگینه شکستی  
چراغ چون تو نباشد به هیچ خانه ولیکن  
کس این سرای نبندد در این چنین که تو بستی  
گرم عذاب نمایی به داغ و درد جدایی  
شکنجه صبر ندارم، بریز خونم و رستی  
بیا که ما سر هستی و کبریا و رعونت  
به زیر پای نهادیم و پای بر سر هستی  
گرت به گوشه چشمی نظر بود به اسیران  
دوای درد من اول، که بی گناه بخستی  
هر آن کست که ببیند روا بود که بگوید  
که من بهشت بدیدم به راستی و درستی  
گرت کسی پیرستد ملامتش نکنم من  
تو هم در آینه بنگر که خویشتن پیرستی  
عجب مدار که سعدی به یاد دوست بنالد  
که عشق موجب شوق است و خمر علت مستی

### *Shattered mirror*

No pledge you ever made you did not break  
You led me into burning fire and left  
You laid the foundation of a transient love  
Putting me in chains and breaking out of the trap.  
You broke my heart unkindly and left  
Walk carefully, then, as a mirror you've shattered  
No light like you is found in any home  
Yet no-one stays indoors as regularly as you.  
If you wish to cause me the pain of separation  
I can't bear torture; kill me and enjoy your liberation  
See that I have suppressed pride and arrogance  
And have even repudiated my whole existence.  
If you have the slightest care for prisoners  
Treat this innocent whom you hurt first  
Anyone seeing you would be right in saying  
That he's seen Heaven well and truly.  
I do not blame anyone worshipping you  
If you look at the mirror even you will do  
No wonder Sa'di mourns in your absence  
For love brings passion and wine drunkenness.<sup>61</sup>

## آن صبح کجا رفت

دوش بی روی تو آتش به سرم بر می شد  
و آبی از دیده می آمد که زمین تر می شد  
تا به افسوس به پایان نرود عمر عزیز  
همه شب ذکر تو می رفت و مکرر می شد  
چون شب آمد همه را دیده بیارامد و من  
گفتی اندر بن مویم سر نشتر می شد  
آن نه می بود که دور از نظرت می خوردم  
خون دل بود که از دیده به ساغر می شد  
از خیال تو به هر سو که نظر می کردم  
پیش چشمم در و دیوار مصور می شد  
چشم مجنون چو بخفتی همه لیلی دیدی  
مدعی بود اگر ش خواب میسر می شد  
هوش می آمد و می رفت و نه دیدار ترا  
می بدم نه خیام ز برابر می شد  
گاه چون عود بر آتش دل تنگم می سوخت  
گاه چون مجرمه ام دود به سر بر می شد  
یا رب آن صبح کجا رفت که شب های دگر  
نفسی می زد و آفاق منور می شد  
سعدها عقد ثریا مگر امشب بگسیخت  
ورنه هر شب به گریبان افق بر می شد

*Where is that dawn?*

Thinking of you at night my head was on fire  
And tears from my eyes flooded the earth  
All night I was speaking your name  
So that dear life would not have gone to waste.  
At night everyone's eyes chance to rest  
Not me, almost as if needles were piercing my head  
What I was drinking without you was not wine  
It was my heart's blood pouring into the cup.  
Thinking of you, everywhere I looked  
I saw nothing but wall after wall after wall  
With his eyes shut, Majnun could see none but Leyli  
He wasn't a true lover if he'd slept peacefully.  
I could not see you, asleep or awake  
Yet your image remained in my head  
Now my heart burns as the incense burns  
Now smoke went up my head as if it were fire.  
God, where did that dawn go when the other nights  
It breathed a while and the horizons were alight?  
Sa'di the Pleiades seems to have lost its necklace tonight  
Since it used to hang from the horizon every night.<sup>62</sup>

## روز و شب مستم

به خاک پای عزیزت که عهد نشکستم  
ز من بریدی و با هیچ کس نپیوستم  
کجا روم که بهیرم بر آستان امید  
اگر به دامن وصلت نمی رسد دستم  
شگفت مانده ام از بامداد روز وداع  
که برخاست قیامت چوبی تو بنشستم  
بلای عشق تو نگذاشت پارسا در پارس  
یکی منم که ندانم نماز چون بستم  
نماز مست شریعت روا نمی دارد  
نماز من که پذیرد که روز و شب مستم  
چنین که دست خیالت گرفت دامن من  
چه بودی از برسیدی به دامنت دستم  
من از کجا و چنانی وصل تو ز کجا  
اگر چه آب حیاتی هلاک خود جستم  
اگر خلاف تو بودست در دم همه عمر  
نه نیک رفت خطا کردم و ندانستم  
بکش چنانکه تو دانی که سعدی آن کس نیست  
که با وجود تو دعوی کند که من هستم

### *Always drunk*

By the dust under your feet I did not break my pledge  
You broke with me and I didn't turn to anyone else.  
Where can I go and die at the threshold of hope  
Now that I cannot be with you, at your feet?  
I wonder why on the day of our separation  
No storm broke out when you left me alone.  
The sin of your love spared no-one pious in Pars  
Except me, and I don't know how I said my prayers.  
Religious law forbids praying while inebriate  
Mine will not be heard as I am always drunk.  
What would be wrong if I took your hand  
Just like your love has gripped me in its hand?  
Having you in my arms, what ambition!  
You're the elixir of life yet I seek my destruction.  
Even if I was inconstant once in my life  
It was not intentional, but unconsciously done.  
Come and kill me as you know how, since  
As long as you are, Sa'di cannot claim to exist.<sup>63</sup>

## زندان عشق

شب فراق که داند که تا سحر چند است  
مگر کسی که به زندان عشق در بند است  
کرفتم از غم دل راه بوستان گیرم  
کدام سرو به بالای دوست مانند است؟  
پیام من که رساند به یار مهرگسل  
که بر شکستی و ما را هنوز پیوند است  
قسم به جان تو گفتن طریق عزت نیست  
به خاک پای تو و آن هم عظیم سوگند است  
که با شکستن پیمان و برگرفتن دل  
هنوز دیده به دیدارت آرزومند است  
بیا که بر سر کویت بساط چهره ماست  
به جای خاک که در زیر پایت افکندست  
خیال روی تو بیخ امید بنشاندست  
بلای عشق تو بنیاد صبر برکنندست  
عجب در آن که تو مجموع و گر قیاس کنی  
به زیر هر خم مویت دلی پراکنندست  
اگر بر هنر نباشی که شخص بنمایی  
کمان برند که پیراهنت گل آکنندست  
ز دست رفته نه تنها منم در این سودا  
چه دست ها که ز دست تو بر خداوند است  
ز ضعف طاقت آهم نماند و ترسم خلق  
کمان برند که سعدی ز دوست خرسند است

### *Prisoner of love*

He would know how long is the night of separation  
Who is fettered in love's prison.  
Suppose I go to the garden to overcome sadness  
What flower can compensate me for your absence?  
Someone take the message to my inconstant lover  
That despite her leaving me I still belong to her.  
To swear by you is an insult, so I swear  
By the dust of your feet – itself a great oath –  
That despite your inconstancy and heart-breaking  
My eyes are still longing to be set on thee.  
Step out of your home and see my face  
Is spread for you to step on instead of dust  
The hope of seeing you has taken deep roots  
But the calamity of your love has uprooted all patience.  
Strange that you are so serene and composed  
While for every hair on you so many hearts are shattered  
If you don't go naked to show your body  
They'd think that your gown is flowery.  
I am not the only one lost in thought of you  
There are many hands raised to God because of you  
Weakness does not let me sigh, and I'm afraid  
That people might think Sa'di is not unhappy without you.<sup>64</sup>

### بند تنهایی

فراق دوستانش باد و یاران  
که ما را دور کرد از دوستداران  
دم در بند تنهایی بفسود  
چو بلبل در قفس روز بهاران  
هلاک ما چنان مهمل گرفتند  
که قتل مور در پای سواران  
به خیل هر که می آیم به زنhar  
نمی بینم بجز زنhar خواران  
ندانستم که در پایان صحبت  
چنین باشد وفای حق گذاران  
به گنج شایگان افتاده بودم  
ندانستم که بر گنجند ماران  
دلا گر دوستی داری به ناچار  
بباید بردنست جور هزاران  
خلاف شرط یاران است سعدی  
که برگردند روز تیرباران  
چه خوش باشد سری در پای یاری  
به اخلاص و ارادت جان سپاران

### *Forlorn captivity*

I am kept afar from my sweetheart  
May he who is behind it suffer the same fate  
In my loneliness my heart burns with rage  
Like a spring nightingale kept in a cage.  
They thought as little of our life  
As that of an ant trampled under a hoof  
Wherever I turn to for help and protection  
I receive nothing but an untrustworthy reception.  
I did not know that by friendship's end  
This is the appreciation that is offered  
I thought I had found an immense treasure  
Not knowing that it is guarded by snakes.  
Although when you love you must expect  
To suffer a thousand oppressions and cruelties  
Yet it is not the way of lovers, Sa'di,  
To turn their back at times of adversity.  
Better to put one's head under the beloved's foot  
And thus die with faith and sincerity.<sup>65</sup>

## منزلگه احرار

خرم آن بقעה که آرامگه یار آنجاست  
راحت جان و شفای دل بیمار آنجاست  
من در این جای همین صورت بی جانم و بس  
دم آنجاست که آن دلبر عیار آنجاست  
تنم اینجاست سقیم و دم آنجاست مقیم  
فلک اینجاست ولی کوکب سیار آنجاست  
آخر ای باد صبا بوبی اگر می آری  
سوی شیراز گذر کن که مرا یار آنجاست  
درد دل پیش که گویم غم دل با که خورم  
روم آنجا که مرا محروم اسرار آنجاست  
نکند میل دل من به تماشای چمن  
که تماشای دل آنجاست که دلبر آنجاست  
سعدی این منزل ویران چه کنی جای تو نیست  
رخت بریند که منزلگه احرار آنجاست

*Abode of the free*

Green is the valley where the beloved resides  
And where there is cure for heavy hearts  
Here I am just this soulless figure  
My heart is where that enticing sweetheart figures.  
My sick body is here and my heart is there:  
The sky is here but that wondering star is there  
O morning breeze if you bring a fragrance  
Blow through Shiraz since my sweetheart is there.  
There is no-one to whom I can open my heart  
I must go where the keeper of my secrets lies  
I have no desire to see gardens green  
I long to be where my sweetheart is.  
Why remain in this worthless ruin, Sa‘di,  
Get up and go to the abode of the free.<sup>66</sup>

### حد جنایت

بیا که نوبت صلح است و دوستی و عنایت  
به شرط آنکه نگوییم از آنچه رفت حکایت  
برین یکی شده بودم که گرد عشق نگردم  
قصاء عشق درآمد پدوخت چشم درایت  
ملامت من مسکین کسی کند که نداند  
که عشق تا به چه حد است و حسن تا به چه غایت  
ز حرص من چه گشاید (?) تو ره به خویشتم ۵۵  
که چشم سعی ضعیف است بی چراغ هدایت  
مرا به دست تو خوش تر هلاک جان گرامی  
هزار باره، که رفتن به دیگری به حمایت  
جنایتی که بکردم اگر درست بیاشد  
فراق روی تو چندین بس است حد جنایت  
به هیچ روی نشاید خلاف رای تو گفتن  
کجا برم گله از دست پادشاه ولايت  
به هیچ صورتی اندر نباشد این همه معنی  
به هیچ سورتی اندر نباشد این همه آیت  
کمال حسن وجودت به وصف راست نیاید  
مگر هم آینه گوید چنان که هست حکایت  
مرا سخن به نهایت رسید و فکر به پایان  
هنوز وصف جمالت نمی رسد به نهایت  
فراق نامه سعدی به هیچ گوش نیامد  
که دردی از سخنانش در او نکرد سرایت

### *Vengeance constrained*

Come, it's time for peace, friendship and kindness  
But not to talk about what went in the past  
I was determined not to fall in love  
Fate brought love and shut my eyes.  
He would admonish me who does not know  
How much I love and how beautiful are you  
My eagerness is helpless without your sight  
For a weak eye will need help from light.  
I would much rather be killed by your hands  
Than seek support from anyone else  
Even if I have committed a crime  
Not seeing you is retribution enough.  
I cannot possibly contradict your will:  
To whom can one complain of the king?  
No-one's appearance hides as much reality as yours  
Neither does a holy chapter contain so many verses.  
Your perfect beauty is beyond description  
Perhaps only the mirror can create a true reflection  
My thoughts and words reached their end  
Yet appreciation of your beauty never ends.  
No-one listens to the story of Sa'di's separation  
Since his pains do not bring from her any recognition.<sup>67</sup>

## وجود حاضر غیب

از هر چه می رود سخن دوست خوشترست  
پیغام آشنا نفس روح پرورست  
هرگز وجود حاضر غیب شنیده ای؟  
من در میان جمع و دم جای دیگرست  
شاهد که در میان نبود شمع گو چیر  
ور هست اگر چراغ نباشد منورست  
ابنای روزگار به صحراء روند و باغ  
صحراء و باغ زنده دلان کوی دلبرست  
جان قدم میروم که در اندازمش ز شوق  
درمانده ام هنوز که نزلى محقرست  
کاش آن به خشم رفته ما آشتنی کنان  
باز آمدی که دیده مشتاق بر درست  
جانا دم چو عود بر آتش بسوختی  
وین دم که می زنم ز غمت دود مجرم است  
شبهاي بى توام شب گور است در خیال  
ور بى تو با مداد کنم روز محشرست  
کيسوت عنبرينه گردن تمام بود  
معشوق خوب روی چه حاجت به زیورست  
سعدي خیال بیهده بستی اميد وصل  
هجرت بکشت و وصل هنوزت مصورست؟  
زنهاي از اين اميد درازت که در دلست  
هیهات از اين خیال محالت که در سرست

### *Absent presence*

Naught is more joyous than the beloved's word  
A message from her is a breath that lifts up the soul.  
Can you believe one to be both present and absent?  
I am with others but my heart is somewhere else.  
When the beloved is absent let the candle die  
And when she is present she shines like a light.  
People go out to the garden and countryside  
The garden of lovers is where the loved one resides.  
Ecstatically I wish to sacrifice my life for her  
My only regret is that it is an unworthy gift to her.  
She left in anger, would that she come back to make up  
And see my hopeful eyes permanently fixed on her path.  
Beloved, you put me like aloes wood on fire  
It's smoke I breath, lamenting our separation dire.  
Without you I feel buried every night  
Just as rising is resurrection-like.  
The chain of your hair is a perfect necklace  
For a beautiful angel is in need of no jewels.  
There was no hope, Sa'di, in your longing for union  
You died of separation and still dream of union?  
Alas, you must now pity your hopeful heart  
And mourn the impossible wish that you have.<sup>68</sup>

یاران صبحی ام کجايند  
گر غصه روزگار گويم  
بس قصه بی شمار گويم  
یک عمر هزار سال باید  
تا من یکی از هزار گويم  
چشمم به زیان حال گوید  
نی آنکه به اختیار گويم  
بر من دل انجمن بسوزد  
گر درد فراق یار گويم  
مرغان چمن فغان برآرند  
گر فرقت نوبهار گويم  
یاران صبحی ام کجايند  
تا درد دل خمار گويم  
کس نیست که دل سوی من آرد  
تا غصه روزگار گويم  
درد دل بی قرار سعدی  
هم با دل بی قرار گويم.

*Where are my drinking companions?*

If I describe the pains of separation  
I'll have to tell the story of damnation.  
It will take me a thousand years  
To tell about one of a thousand tears.  
My sadness is evident from my eyes  
No need to say it by mouth.  
Friends would have pity on me  
If I described the pain of being lonely.  
Even the garden birds will cry  
If I tell them about the loss of my spring.  
Where are my fellow morning-drinkers  
So I can tell them about the morning after.  
No-one's heart is open to mine  
So that I can tell him the sorrows of life.  
No choice but to describe the pain in my head  
Only to my own pain-struck heart.<sup>69</sup>

## کمند شوق

گر از جفای تو روزی دم بیازارد  
کمند شوق کشانم به صلح بازآرد  
ز درد عشق تو دوشم امید صبح نبود  
اسیر عشق چه تاب شب دراز آرد  
دلی عجب نبود گر بسوخت کاتش عشق  
چه جای موم که پولاد در گداز آرد  
توبی که گر بخرامد درخت قامت تو  
ز رشك سرو روان را به اهتزاز آرد  
دگر به روی خود از خلق در بخواهم بست  
مگر کسی ز توام مژده ای فرازآرد  
اگر قبول کنی سرنهیم بر قدمت  
چو بت پرست که در پیش بت نماز آرد  
یکی به سمع رضا گوش دل به سعدی دار  
که سوز عشق سخن های دلنواز آرد

### *The pull of desire*

If by your unkindness my heart is hurt  
The pull of desire will make it submit  
I could not hope to see the day last night  
Being a captive of love with pain in my heart.  
No wonder that my heart burns since  
The fire of love melts steel let alone wax  
You are the one who if you move your body  
You will shake up the cypress tree with envy.  
I am decided to give up seeing people  
Unless someone brings me good news of you  
If you wish I will put my head at your feet  
And worship you as they worship idols.  
For once at least listen to what Sa‘di says  
Because the fire of love makes pleasing words.<sup>70</sup>

## سیمرغ و زاغ

ای کاب زندگانی من در دهان توست  
تیر هلاک ظاهر من در کمان توست  
گر برقعنی فرونگذاری بدین جمال  
در شهر هر که کشته شود در ضممان توست  
تشیبه روی تو نکنم من به آفتاب  
کاین مدح آفتاب، نه تعظیم شان توست  
گر یک نظر به گوشه چشم ارادتی  
با ما کنی و گر نکنی حکم از آن توست  
هر روز خلق را سر یاری و صاحبیست  
ما را همین سر است که بر آستان توست  
بسیار دیده ایم درختان میوه دار  
زین به ندیده ایم که در بوستان توست  
گر دست دوستان نرسد باغ را چه جرم؟  
منع که می رود گنه از باگبان توست  
بسیار در دل آمد اندیشه ها و رفت  
نقشی که آن نمی رود از دل نشان توست  
با من هزارنویت اگر دشمنی کنی  
ای دوست همچنان دل من مهربان توست  
سعده به قدر خویش تمنای وصل کن  
سیمرغ ما چه لایق زاغ آشیان توست

### *Simorgh and the magpie*

The elixir of my life is in your mouth  
And in your bow is the arrow of my death  
Cover that beauty of yours with a veil  
Or the death of your lovers will be your fault.  
I will not compare your face to the sun  
Since it will honour not you but the sun  
Whether you give or don't give me a look of approval  
The command is yours, do it or not.  
People daily look for friends and lords  
I only have this head which is at your threshold  
Trees full of fruits I have seen many  
But those in your orchard are better than any.  
No offence if I cannot make it to the garden  
You being the gardener, the barrier is you  
Many thoughts came and went in my mind  
The one that would not go is the picture of you.  
Even if you offend me a thousand times,  
Friend, my heart is still filled with love for you  
Sa'di, you must seek love as much as you are worth  
How can a magpie seek the love of Simorgh?<sup>71</sup>

## وداع

بگذار تا بگریم چون ابر در بهاران  
کز سنگ ناله خیزد روز وداع یاران  
هر کو شراب فرقت روزی چشیده باشد  
داند که سخت باشد قطع امیدواران  
با ساریان بگویید احوال آب چشم  
تا بر شتر نبندد محمل به روز باران  
بگذاشتند ما را در دیده آب حسرت  
گریان چو در قیامت چشم گناهکاران  
ای صبح شب نشینان جانم بطاقت آمد  
از بس که دیر ماندی چون شام روزه داران  
چندین که بر شمردم از ماجرا عشقت  
اندوه دل نگفتم الا یک از هزاران  
سعدی به روزگاران مهری نشسته بر دل  
بیرون نمی توان کرد الا به روزگاران  
چندت کنم حکایت شرح این قدر کفايت  
باقی نمی توان گفت الا به غمگساران

### *Ceremonies of farewell*

Let me cry hard like the spring cloud  
Farewell to friends makes stones mourn aloud  
Anyone having once tasted the wine of separation  
Knows the pains of losing hope and aspiration.  
Tell the camel-driver about the water in my eye  
To put the water-skin aside when it pours from the sky  
They left us, eyes filled with the water of desire,  
Weeping like the sinful at Resurrection with hellfire.  
O morning of the night-dwellers please begin  
You're as late as the night of those who fast  
So much that I have said about your love's story  
Is but one in a thousand of my grief and misery.  
Years have embedded such affection in your heart,  
Sa'di, that only years could remove from your heart.  
I have told you enough, now I will be coy  
What's left I'll tell friends whose sympathy I enjoy.<sup>72</sup>

### چو بلبل آمدمت

من از تو صبر ندارم که بی تو بنشینم  
کس دگر نتوانم که بر تو بگزینم  
بپرس حال من آخر چو بگذری روزی  
که چون همی گذرد روزگار مسکینم  
من اهل دوزخم ار بی تو زنده خواهم شد  
که در بهشت نیارد خدای غمگینم  
ندامت که چه گویم تو هر دو چشم منی  
که بی وجود شریفت جهان نمی بینم  
چو روی دوست نبینی جهان ندیدن به  
شب فرق منه شمع پیش بالینم  
ضرورت است که عهد وفا بسریرمت  
وگر چفا بسرآید هزار چندینم  
نه هاونم که بنام بکوقتی ای یار  
چو دیگ بر سر آتش نشان که بنشینم  
بگرد بر سرم ای آسیای دور زمان  
به هر چفا که توانی، که سنگ زیرینم  
چو بلبل آمدمت تا چو گل ثنا گویم  
چو لاله لال بگردی زبان تحسینم  
مرا پلنگ به سرینجه، ای نگار نکشت  
تو می کشی به سرینجه نگارینم  
چو ناف آهو خونم بسوخت در دل تنگ  
برفت در همه آفاق بوی مشکینم  
هنر بیار و زبان آوری مکن سعدی  
چه حاجت است بگوید شکر که شیرینم

*I came to you like a nightingale*

I have no patience to be without you  
Nor can I put anyone above you.  
Do ask how I am as you pass one day  
And see how miserable are my days.  
Without you God will put me in hell  
At the Resurrection, not miserable in heaven.  
What can I say, you are both my eyes  
Since without you I cannot see the sun rise.  
Not seeing the friend's face, better not to see at all  
At the night of separation don't put candles on the wall.  
I pledge to remain constant in every way  
But if you come it'll doubly make my day.  
I will not mourn if you beat me like a mortar  
Put me like a pan on the fire and I'll settle down.  
Turn like the watermill's upper granite  
As hard as you can as I am under it.  
I tried to sing like a nightingale to your flower  
Like a dumb tulip you stopped me admiring you.  
Beloved, I was not killed by the leopard's claws  
And yet you are killing me with your lovely paws.  
Blood burnt in my heart like the navel of a deer  
The aroma of musk spread everywhere.  
Stop playing with words, Sa'di, show art  
Sugar is indeed sweet but that apart.<sup>73</sup>

### مجال صبر تنگ آمد

چنان در قید مهرت پای بندم  
که گوئی آهوي سر در کمندم  
کهی بر درد بي درمان بگريم  
کهی بر حال بي سامان بخندم  
مرا هوشی نماند از عشق و گوشی  
که پند هوشمندان کاريندم  
مجال صبر تنگ آمد به يکبار  
حدیث عشق بر صحرا فکندم  
نه مجتونم که دل يردارم از دوست  
مده گر عاقلي اي خواجه پندم  
چنین صورت نبندد هيج نقاش  
معاذ الله من اين صورت ببندم  
چه جانها در غمت فرسود و تن ها  
نه تنها من اسیر و مستمندم  
تو هم بازآمدی ناچار و ناکام  
اگر بازآمدی بخت بلندم  
کر آوازم دهی من خفته در گور  
برآسايد روان دردمندم  
سری دارم فدای خاک پایت  
کر آسایش رساني ور گزندم  
وگر در رنج سعدی راحت توست  
من اين بيداد بر خود می پسندم

*I miss you so much*

I am so trapped in your love  
As if a deer lassoed by want  
Now I weep from my endless pain  
Now I laugh at my ruined state.  
I have no sense in me left  
To listen to the advice of the deft  
I missed you so much in the end  
That, like Majnun, I took to the desert.  
I am not mad enough to give up her love  
Stop advising me if you are wise  
No artist could paint a face as fine  
I'd never give up that face divine.  
What bodies and souls were lost for you  
So I am not the only one, others too  
You will come back only when  
My good luck returns to me.  
Even lying in my grave if you call  
It'll soothe my painful soul  
Whether you bring me pain or comfort  
My head is not worth the dust under your feet.  
And if your comfort is in Sa‘di’s pain  
Of this injustice I will not disdain.<sup>74</sup>

**ETHICAL / MYSTICAL**

## مکان آدمیت

تن آدمی شریف است به جان آدمیت  
نه همین لباس زیباست نشان آدمیت  
اگر آدمی به چشم است و دهان و گوش و بینی  
چه میان نقش دیوار و میان آدمیت  
خور و خواب و خشم و شهوت شغب است و جهل و  
ظلمت

حیوان خبر ندارد ز جهان آدمیت  
به حقیقت آدمی باش و گرنه مرغ باشد  
که همان سخن بگوید به زبان آدمیت  
مگر آدمی نبودی که اسیر دیو گشتی  
که فرشته ره ندارد به مکان آدمیت  
اگر این درنده خویی ز طبیعتت پمیرد  
همه عمر زنده باشی به روان آدمیت  
رسد آدمی به جایی که بجز خدا نبیند  
بنگر که تا چه حد است مکان آدمیت  
طیران مرغ دیدی، تو ز پای بند شهوت  
بدرا آی تا بینی طیران آدمیت  
نه بیان فضل کردم که نصیحت تو گفتم  
هم از آدمی شنیدیم بیان آدمیت

### *The place of humanity*

The human body is ennobled by the human soul  
You will not be human just wearing a nice shawl  
If eye, mouth, ear and nose define a human being  
What is the difference between man and a picture  
on the wall?

Eating, sleeping, anger, passion are darkness and ignorance  
Animals know not of the world of humanity at all  
Try to be a human being in reality, otherwise a parrot  
May mimic human beings' language, speech and call.  
How as a human became you captive to demons?  
Not even angels can rise up to man's potential  
If the cannibalism in your nature dies and disappears  
You will be always alive through the human soul.  
Man may reach a point of seeing no-one but God  
See how man's place may be mighty and high  
Birds fly, free yourself from fetters of passion  
To see how human beings can fly like them all.  
I did not claim to be virtuous, just gave you advice  
It was from humanity itself that we learned about man.<sup>75</sup>

## ملک گدایان

چون عیش گدایان به جهان سلطنتی نیست  
مجموع تر از ملک رضا مملکتی نیست  
گر منزلتی هست کسی را مگر آن است  
کاندر نظر هیچ کشش منزلتی نیست  
هر کس صفتی دارد و رنگی و نشانی  
تو ترک صفت کن که از این به صفتی نیست  
پوشیده کسی بینی فردای قیامت  
کامروز برهنست و بر او عاریتی نیست  
آن کس که در او معرفتی هست کدام است؟  
آنست که با هیچ کشش معرفتی نیست  
سنگی و گیاهی که در آن خاصیتی هست  
از آدمیین به که در او منفعتی نیست  
درویش تو در مصلحت خویش ندانی  
خوش باش اگر نیست، که بی مصلحتی نیست  
آن دوست نباشد که شکایت کند از دوست  
بر خون که دلارام بربزد دیتی نیست  
راه ادب این است که سعدی به تو آموخت  
گر گوش بداری به از این تربیتی نیست

### *The kingdom of beggars*

There is no life as royal as that of beggars  
No kingdom is more secure than contentment  
If anyone has real dignity it is he  
Whom others treat with indignity.  
Everyone has a character, a colour, a creed  
Give them all up, that is the best thing  
On the Day of Judgement he will be clothed  
Who in this world is naked, is not adorned.  
Who has real knowledge of the world?  
It is he who knows no-one and is all on his own  
The stone and the vegetation which are of some use  
Are better than the man who is not useful to others.  
You don't know, O dervish, what is expedient  
Rejoice that your poverty is not inexpedient  
He who complains of the beloved is no lover  
There is no compensation for being killed by the lover.  
Good manners are these which are taught by Sa'di  
If you seek education there is none better.<sup>76</sup>

### کشته شمشیر عشق

آن را که جای نیست همه شهر جای اوست  
درویش هر کجا که شب آید سرای اوست  
بی خانمان که هیچ ندارد بجز خدای  
او را گدا مگوی که سلطان گدای اوست  
مرد خدا به مشرق و مغرب غریب نیست  
هر جا که می رود همه ملک خدای اوست  
آن کز توانگری و بزرگی و خواجه‌گی  
بیگانه شد، به هر که رسد آشنای اوست  
کوتاه دیدگان همه راحت طلب کنند  
عارف بلا، که راحت او در بلای اوست  
عاشق که بر مشاهده دوست دست یافت  
در هر چه بعد از آن نگرد اژدهای اوست  
بگذار هر چه داری و بگذر که هیچ نیست  
این پنج روزه عمر که مرگ از قفای اوست  
هر آدمی که کشته شمشیر عشق شد  
گو غم مخور که ملک ابد خونبهای اوست  
از دست دوست هر چه ستانی شکر بود  
سعدي رضای خود مطلب چون رضای اوست

### *Martyr to love*

The whole town belongs to the homeless person  
The dervish is at home anywhere that night falls.  
Do not call the homeless person who has no-one but God  
A beggar, for the sultan is below him in the sight of God.  
The man of God is no stranger in east and west  
It is the kingdom of God wherever he can rest.  
He who is stripped of riches, lordship and power  
Is known and familiar to everyone he encounters.  
The narrow-minded merely seek joy and comfort  
The *aref* seeks discomfort, which is his comfort.  
The lover who managed to observe Him  
If he sought anything else it would be his ruin.  
Leave all you have and leave, for this short life  
Is nothing, and is followed by nothing but demise.  
Whoever became a martyr to the Kingdom of Love  
Need not worry for he will inherit the Kingdom Eternal.  
Whatever the Beloved gives is like sugar sweet  
Sa‘di, seek not your contentment except by His Will.<sup>77</sup>

بگذار تا بیفتد و بیند سزای خویش  
ای روبهک چرا ننشینی به جای خویش  
با شیر پنجه کردی و دیدی سزای خویش  
دشمن به دشمن آن نپستند که بی خرد  
با نفس خود کند به هوا مراد خویش  
از دست دیگران چه شکایت کند کسی  
سیلی به دست خویش زند بر قفای خویش  
دزد از جفای شحنه چه فریاد می کند  
گو گردنت ثمی زند الا جفای خویش  
خونت برای قالی سلطان بربختند  
ابله چرا نخفتی بر بوریای خویش  
گر هر دو دیده هیچ نبیند به اتفاق  
بهتر ز دیده ای که نبیند خطای خویش  
چاه است و راه و دیده بینا و آفتاب  
تا آدمی نگاه کند پیش پای خویش  
چندین چراغ دارد و بی راهه می رود  
بگذار تا بیفتد و بیند سزای خویش  
با دیگران بگویی که ظالم به چه فتاد  
تا چاه دیگران نکنند از برای خویش  
گر گوش دل به گفته سعدی کند کسی  
اول رضای حق طلبید پس رضای خویش

***Let him fall...***

Little fox, why did you not know your place  
You fought with a lion and got what you deserved  
Not even your enemy would wish for what  
You bring onto yourself by your whims.  
He who brings disaster onto himself  
Cannot complain of the ill intentions of others  
Why would a thief mind the punishment of the law  
When it is he who brings it on himself?  
They let your blood for the Sultan's carpet  
Why, idiot, did you not sleep on your straw mat?  
If a person completely lost his sight  
It would be better than him not seeing his fault.  
There are holes on the road but also light  
So one can clearly see holes from a height  
Light everywhere and yet he takes the wrong path  
Let him fall, then, and reap the punishment he must.  
Tell people that the unjust dug their own graves  
So they don't go around and dig graves for others  
Anyone whose heart listens to Sa‘di’s advice  
Will not put his own will above God’s.<sup>78</sup>

## بنیاد بقا محکم از اوست

به جهان خرم از آنم که جهان خرم از اوست  
عاشقم بر همه عالم که همه عالم از اوست  
به غنیمت شمر ای دوست دم عیسی صبح  
تا دل مرده مگر زنده کنی کاین دم از اوست  
نه فلک راست مسلم نه ملک را حاصل  
آنچه در سر سویدای بنی آدم از اوست  
به حلاوت بخورم زهر که شاهد ساقیست  
به ارادت ببرم درد که درمانم از اوست  
زخم خونینم اگر به نشود به باشد  
خنک آن زخم که هر لحظه مرا مرهم از اوست  
غم و شادی بر عارف چه تفاوت دارد  
ساقیا باده بده شادی آن کاین غم از اوست  
پادشاهی و گدایی بر ما یکسان است  
که بر این در همه را پشت عبادت خم از اوست  
سعدیا گر بکند سیل فنا خانه عمر  
دل قوی دار که بنیاد بقا محکم از اوست

### *The foundation of being*

I am cheerful in this lush world of His  
I love it because it all comes from Him.  
Value, my friend, the Jesus-like morning breath  
Which will bring life to your dead heart.  
Neither the universe nor angels know at all  
What deep secrets He holds for us all.  
Poison is sweet, thinking He is the Saqi  
I'll happily bear the pain since He is also the cure.  
I am happy that my bloody wound does not heal  
So I constantly receive healing from Him.  
To the *aref* sadness and joy are the same  
Let's drink happily that the sadness is from Him.  
Being a beggar or a king is all the same to me  
Since everyone's back is bent before Him.  
Sa'di, even if the flood of death uproots the abode  
Be sure that the foundation of being is firm from Him.<sup>79</sup>

با تو همین ماجرا رود

بسیار سال ها به سر خاک ما رود

کاین آب چشمہ آید و باد صبا رود

این پنج روزه مهلت ایام، آدمی

بر خاک دیگران به تکبر چرا رود

ای دوست بر جنازه دشمن چو بگذری

شادی مکن که با تو همین ماجرا رود

دامن کشان که می رود امروز بر زمین

فردا غبار کالبدش در هوا رود

خاکت در استخوان رود ای نفس شوخ چشم

مانند سرمه-دان که در آن توتیا رود

دنیا حریف سفله و معشوق بی وفات

چون می رود هر آینه بگذار تا رود

این است حال تن که تو بیینی به زیر خاک

تا جان نازنین که برآید کجا رود

بر ساییان حسن عمل اعتماد نیست

سعدی مگر به سایه لطف خدا رود

یا رب مگیر بنده مسکین و دست گیر

کز تو کرم برآید و از ما خطرا رود

*The same fate shall befall you*

Years will pass on the dust of our dead rows  
While the spring still fills and the breeze still blows.  
In these few days of life why should one treat  
Other people with arrogance and conceit?  
Friend, when you pass by your enemy's funeral cortège  
Do not jump for joy for you'll be just the same one day.  
Now you walk on dust with such pride  
In the air tomorrow will be the mist of your own dust.  
Your bones will fill with dust, O pleasure-seeking soul  
Just as the make-up box fills with blue vitriol.  
Life is a base partner and an inconstant lover  
As it moves on just let it go forward.  
You can imagine the state of the body in the grave  
One wonders where the dear soul will have gone.  
One cannot even trust the reward of good deeds,  
Sa'di, unless it is combined with God's grace.  
O God, forgive your wretched servants and help  
Since from us are the errors, from you the grace.<sup>80</sup>

### علم درویشان

ای که انکار کنی علم درویشان را  
تو زنانی که چه سودا و سرست ایشان را  
کنج آزادگی و کنج قناعت ملکیست  
که به شمشیر میسر نشود سلطان را  
طلب منصب فانی نکند صاحب عقل  
عاقل آن است که اندیشه کند پایان را  
جمع کردند و نهادند و به حسرت رفتند  
وین چه دارد که به حسرت بگذارد آن را  
آن بدر می روید از باغ به دلتگی و داغ  
وین به بازوی فرح می شکند زندان را  
دستگاهی نه که تشویش قیامت باشد  
مرغ آبیست چه اندیشه کند طوفان را  
جان بیگانه ستاند ملک الملوت به زجر  
زجر حاجت نبود عاشق جان افshan را  
چشم همت نه به دنیا که به عقبی نبود  
عارف عاشق شوریده سرگردان را  
در ازل بود که پیمان محبت بستند  
نشکند مرد اگر کش سر برود پیمان را  
عاشقی سوخته ای بی سر و سامان دیدم  
کفتم ای یار مکن بر سر فکرت جان را  
نفسی سرد برآورد ضعیف از سر درد  
گفت بگذار من بی سر و بی سامان را  
پند دلپند تو در گوش من آید هیهات  
من که بر درد حریصم چه کنم درمان را  
سعدیا عمر عزیز است به غفلت مگذار  
وقت فرصت نشود قوت مگر نادان را

### *The world of dervishes*

You who deny the world of dervishes  
Do not know of their beliefs and wishes,  
The treasure of needlessness and contentment is in a place  
Which the sultan and his kingdom cannot reach by force.  
No-one with reason would look for transient power  
One who has reason would contemplate the dire end  
The rich man accumulated and ruefully disappeared  
But the dervish has nothing to leave behind with remorse.  
The former leaves the garden of life full of regret  
Whereas the latter breaks free from material living  
He has no reason to worry about the Day of Judgement  
Like a seagull which is not afraid of storm.  
The Angel of Death kills strangers painfully  
No pain though for the dervish familiar to Him  
A dervish lover is so free from need and greed  
That he wants neither this world nor even the other.  
The pact of love was made at the dawn of creation  
He would not break his word even on pain of death  
I saw a lover, burnt by experience with nowhere to go  
I told him, Friend do not sacrifice your life for your beliefs.  
Ah, he said, weakly with a cold painful sigh,  
Please leave me alone, I who have nothing of my own,  
I will never listen to your good word of advice  
For I seek pain and need no cure otherwise.  
Life is dear, Sa‘di, to be lived wise  
Time is not wasted except by the unwise.<sup>81</sup>

# Notes

## PREFACE

- 1.I have tried to rectify this gross neglect in a series of 20 articles in Persian, published in the literary journal *Iranshenasi*, which were later put together in a single volume, *Sa'di Sha'er-e Eshq o Zendegi*; in my book in English, *Sa'di, The Poet of Life, Love and Compassion*; and in an anthology of his works, *Golchin-e Sa'di*.

## INTRODUCTION

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- 27.See Katouzian, *Sa'di: The Poet of Life*, ch. 3.
- 28.See Hamidiyan, *Sa'di dar Ghazal*, ch. 2.
- 29.Ibid., p. 114.
- 30.Ibid., p. 102.
- 31.For a good summary of their views, see Yohannan, *The Poet Sa'di*, ch. 4.
- 32.Quoted in ibid. pp. 96–7.
- 33.See Nicholson's introduction to Lucas White King's *Badayi*, n.pag [2].
- 34.Foroughi's *Kolliyat*, pp. 279–80.
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- 37.*Kolliyat*, p. 560.
- 38.*Kolliyat*, p. 442.
- 39.*Kolliyat*, p. 421.
- 40.*Kolliyat*, p. 604.
- 41.*Kolliyat*, p. 617.
- 42.*Kolliyat*, p. 636.
- 43.*Kolliyat*, p. 419.
- 44.*Kolliyat*, p. 428.
- 45.*Kolliyat*, p. 417.
- 46.*Kolliyat*, p. 604.
- 47.*Kolliyat*, p. 418.
- 48.*Kolliyat*, p. 638.
- 49.*Kolliyat*, p. 603.
- 50.*Kolliyat*, p. 594.
- 51.*Kolliyat*, p. 458.
- 52.*Kolliyat*, p. 476.
- 53.*Kolliyat*, p. 458.
- 54.*Kolliyat*, p. 421.
- 55.*Kolliyat*, p. 525.
- 56.*Kolliyat*, p. 433.
- 57.*Kolliyat*, p. 524.
- 58.*Kolliyat*, p. 556.

## POEMS

- 1.*Kolliyat*, pp. 560–61.
- 2.*Kolliyat*, p. 606.
- 3.*Kolliyat*, p. 560.
- 4.*Kolliyat*, pp. 559–60.
- 5.*Kolliyat*, p. 453.

- [6.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 438.
- [7.](#)There are two puns here. The name Shirin, Farhad's beloved, means sweet. Being 'salty' in Persian is being humorous or teasing.
- [8.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 611.
- [9.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 608–9
- [10.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 562.
- [11.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 481.
- [12.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 557.
- [13.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 521
- [14.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 478–9
- [15.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 472.
- [16.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 452.
- [17.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 465.
- [18.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 451.
- [19.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 468.
- [20.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 494.
- [21.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 614.
- [22.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 618.
- [23.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 499.
- [24.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 637.
- [25.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 553.
- [26.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 573.
- [27.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 490.
- [28.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 454.
- [29.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 548
- [30.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 565
- [31.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 514
- [32.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 546.
- [33.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 457
- [34.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 463.
- [35.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 493.
- [36.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 564.
- [37.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 594
- [38.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 475.
- [39.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 637.
- [40.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 464–5
- [41.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 463
- [42.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 576–7.
- [43.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 552
- [44.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 257.
- [45.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 469–70.
- [46.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 568–9
- [47.](#)The Persian word for 'sugar' is *shekar*, the name of Khosrow's mistress; *Shirin* means 'sweet' and was the name of Khosrow's favourite wife.
- [48.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 469.
- [49.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 553–4
- [50.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 632.
- [51.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 504.

- [52.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 551.
- [53.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 625
- [54.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 505.
- [55.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 528
- [56.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 556.
- [57.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 549.
- [58.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 526.
- [59.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 604.
- [60.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 600
- [61.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 605.
- [62.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 488
- [63.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 546.
- [64.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 433–4.
- [65.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 579
- [66.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 428–9.
- [67.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 466–7.
- [68.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 435.
- [69.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 575.
- [70.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 472.
- [71.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 432.
- [72.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 578–9.
- [73.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 568.
- [74.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 549–50.
- [75.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 789–90.
- [76.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 789.
- [77.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 787–8.
- [78.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 796–7.
- [79.](#)*Kolliyat*, pp. 787–8.
- [80.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 793.
- [81.](#)*Kolliyat*, p. 785.



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